

A smile in his gray mustachio lurks
Whenever he thinks of the King of Spain,
And the listed tulips look like Turks,
And the silent gardener as he works
Is changed to the Dean of Jaen. 20

The windmills on the outermost
Verge of the landscape in the haze,
To him are towers on the Spanish coast,
With whiskered sentinels at their post.
Though this is the river Maese.

But when the winter rains begin,
He sits and smokes by the blazing brands,
And old seafaring men come in,
Goat-bearded, gray, and with double chin,
And rings upon their hands. 30

They sit there in the shadow and shine
Of the flickering fire of the winter night;
Figures in colour and design
Like those by Rembrandt of the Rhine,
Half darkness and half light.

And they talk of ventures lost or won,
And their talk is ever and ever the same,
While they drink the red wine of Tarragon,
From the cellars of some Spanish Don,
Or convent set on flame. 40

Restless at times, with heavy strides
He paces his parlour to and fro;
He is like a ship that at anchor rides
And swings with the rising and falling tides,
And tugs at her anchor-tow.

Voices mysterious far and near,
Sound of the wind and sound of the sea,
Are calling and whispering in his ear,
“Simon Danz! Why stayest thou here?
Come forth and follow me!”

50

So he thinks he shall take to the sea again
For one more cruise with his buccaneers,
To singe the beard of the King of Spain,
And capture another Dean of Jaen
And sell him in Algiers. /

Poems of Manhood

EDITED AND ANNOTATED

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POEMS OF MANHOOD.



Among the aims of this selection of English poetry are, first, the provision of a good deal of the best, and second, the avoidance of what is difficult, particularly in thought, but also as far as possible in language. A certain moral quality should also underlie the educative in a book for students. The young are students of life more than of their books, and thirst for the moral and even the reflective with a thirst compared to which their appetite for literature as such is but forced and feeble. The title indicates that this moral element has been carefully sought.

Nothing is more necessary in a new selection than that it should avoid the beaten track. This has been done as far as possible. Again, while the pieces chosen are largely narrative, they have been set off by short pieces, chiefly sonnets ; and the whole has been designed for variety and breadth of reading. There is a very gradual rise in difficulty, but the last quarter of the selection has been made sufficiently advanced to mark real progress.

The notes have been made as short as possible. They deal only with the difficulties of thought or language which might prove real obstacles to the student.

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MILTON

FROM THE HYMN ON THE NATIVITY

RING out, ye crystal spheres !
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so ;
And let your silver chime
, Move in melodious time ;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow ;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For, if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back and fetch the Age of Gold,
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould,
And Hell itself will pass away.
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

10

GORDON

FROM THE WRECK

"TURN out, boys."—"What's up with our super
to-night?

The man's mad—Two hours to daybreak I'd swear—
Stark mad—why, there isn't a glimmer of light."

"Take Bolingbroke, Alec, give Jack the young mare :
Look sharp. A large vessel lies jamm'd on the reef,

And many on board still, and some wash'd on shore.
Ride straight with the news—they may send some relief
From the township; and we—we can do little more.

You, Alec, you know the near cuts ; you can cross
'The Sugarloaf' ford with a scramble, I think; 10
Don't spare the blood filly, nor yet the black horse;
Should the wind rise, God help them ! the ship will
soon sink.

Old Peter's away down the paddock, to drive
The nags to the stockyard as fast as he can—
A life and death matter: so, lads, look alive."
Half dress'd, in the dark to the stockyard we ran.

There was bridling with hurry, and saddling with haste,
Confusion and cursing for lack of a moon;
"Be quick with these buckles, we've no time to waste ;"
"Mind the mare, she can use her hind legs to some
tune." 20

“Make sure of the crossing-place; strike the old track,
 They’ve fenced off the new one; look out for the holes
 On the wombat hills.” “Down with the slip rails; stand
 back.”
 “And ride, boys, the pair of you, ride for your souls.”

In the low branches heavily laden with dew,
 In the long grasses spoiling with deadwood that day.
 Where the blackwood, the box. and the bastard oak grew,
 Between the tall gum trees we gallop’d away—

We crash’d through a brush fence. we splash’d through
 a swamp—
 We steered for the north near “The Eaglehawk’s Nest”
 We bore to the left, just beyond “The Red Camp,” 31
 And round the black tea-tree belt wheel’d to the west—

We cross’d a low range sickly scented with musk
 From wattle-tree blossom—we skirted a marsh—
 Then the dawn faintly dappled with orange the dusk.
 And peal’d overhead the jay’s laughter note harsh,
 And shot the first sunstreak behind us, and soon
 The dim dewy uplands were dreamy with light,
 And full on our left flash’d “The Reedy Lagoon,”
 And sharply “The Sugarloaf” rear’d on our right. 40
 A smother’d curse broke through the bushman’s
 brown beard;
 He turn’d in his saddle, his brick-colour’d cheek
 Flush’d feebly with sundawn, said, “Just what I fear’d,
 Last fortnight’s late rainfall has flooded the creek.”

Black Bolingbroke snorted, and stood on the brink
One instant, then deep in the dark, sluggish swirl
Plunged headlong. I saw the horse suddenly sink,
Till round the man's armpits the waves seem'd to curl.
We follow'd,—one cold shock, and deeper we sank
Than they did, and twice tried the landing in vain. 50
The third struggle won it, straight up the steep bank
We stagger'd, then out on the skirts of the plain.

The stockrider, Alec, at starting had got
The lead, and had kept it throughout; 'twas his boast,
That through thickest of scrub he could steer like a shot.
And the black horse was counted the best on the coast.

The mare had been awkward enough in the dark,
She was eager and headstrong, and barely half broke;
She had had me too close to a big stringy-bark,
And had made a near thing of a crooked sheoak; 60

But now on the open, lit up by the morn,
She flung the white foam-flakes from nostril to neck,
And chased him—I hatless, with shirtsleeves all torn
(For he may ride ragged who rides from a wreck)—
And faster and faster across the wide heath
We rode till we raced. Then I gave her her head,
And she—stretching out with the bit in her teeth—
She caught him, outpaced him, and passed him, and led.

We neared the new fence; we were wide of the track;
I look'd right and left—she had never been tried 70

At a stiff leap. 'Twas little he cared on the black.

"You're more than a mile from the gateway," he cried.
I hung to her head, touched her flank with the spurs
(In the red streak of rail not the ghost of a gap);
She shortened her long stroke, she pricked her sharp
ears,

She flung it behind her with hardly a rap—
I saw the post quiver where Bolingbroke struck,
And guessed that the pace we had come the last
mile
Had blown him a bit (he could jump like a buck).

We galloped more steadily then for a while. 80

The heath was soon pass'd, in the dim distance lay
The mountain. The sun was just clearing the tips
Of the ranges to eastward. The mare—could she stay?

She was bred very nearly as clean as Eclipse;
She led, and as oft as he came to her side,
She took the bit free and untiring as yet,
Her neck was arched double, her nostrils were wide,
And the tips of her tapering ears nearly met—

"You're lighter than I am," said Alec at last,
"The horse is dead beat and the mare isn't blown. 90
She must be a good one—ride on and ride fast,

You know your way now." So I rode on alone.
Still galloping forward we pass'd the two flocks
At Macintyre's hut and Macallister's hill—

She was galloping strong at the Warrigal Rocks—
On the Wallaby Range she was galloping still—

And over the wasteland and under the wood,
By down and by dale, and by fell and by flat,
She gallop'd, and here in the stirrups I stood
To ease her, and there in the saddle I sat 100
To steer her.

We suddenly struck the red loam
Of the track near the troughs—then she reeled on
the rise—
From her crest to her croup covered over with foam,
And blood-red her nostrils and bloodshot her eyes;
A dip in the dell where the wattle fire bloomed—
A bend round a bank that had shut out the view—
Large framed in the mild light the mountain had loom'd
With a tall, purple peak bursting out from the blue.

I pull'd her together, I press'd her, and she
Shot down the decline to the Company's yard, 110
And on by the paddocks, yet under my knee
I could feel her heart thumping the saddle-flaps hard.
Yet a mile and another, and now we were near
The goal, and the fields and the farms flitted past.
And 'twixt the two fences I turned with a cheer,
For a green grass-fed mare 'twas a far thing and fast;
And labourers, roused by her galloping hoofs,
Saw bare-headed rider and foam-sheeted steed;
And shone the white walls and the slate-covered roofs 119
Of the township. I steadied her then—I had need—
Where stood the old chapel (where stands the new
church:
Since chapels to churches have changed in that town).

A short, sidelong stagger, a long, forward lurch,
A slight choking sob, and the mare had gone down.
I slipp'd off the bridle, I slackened the girth,
I ran on and left her and told them my news;
I saw her soon afterwards. What was she worth?
How much for her hide? She had never worn
shoes.

WORDSWORTH

THREE YEARS SHE GREW

THREE years she grew in sun and shower.
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse; and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, 10
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend; 20

Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form
By silent sympathy.
The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round;
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

30

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height.
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

40

LONGFELLOW
THE SONG OF HIAWATHA
(INTRODUCTION).

SHOULD you ask me, whence these stories ?
Whence these legends and traditions,
With the odours of the forest,
With the dew and damp of meadows,
With the curling smoke of wigwams,
With the rushing of great rivers,
With their frequent repetitions,
And their wild reverberations,
As of thunder in the mountains ?

I should answer. I should tell you, 10
" From the forests and the prairies,
From the great lakes of the Northland,
From the land of the Ojibways,
From the land of the Dacotahs,
From the mountains, moors, and fen-lands,
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.
I repeat them as I heard them
From the lips of Nawadaha,
The musician, the sweet singer." 20

Should you ask where Nawadaha
Found these songs so wild and wayward,

Found these legends and traditions,
I should answer, I should tell you,
"In the birds'-nests of the forest,
In the lodges of the beaver,
In the hoof-prints of the bison,
In the eyry of the eagle!

"All the wild-fowl sang them to him,
In the moorlands and the fen-lands, 30
In the melancholy marshes;
Chetowaik, the plover, sang them,
Mahng, the loon, the wild-goose, Wawa,
The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!"
If still further you should ask me.
Saying, "Who was Nawadaha?
'Tell us of this Nawadaha,'"

I should answer your inquiries
Straightway in such words as follow. 40

"In the vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley,
By the pleasant water-courses,
Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.
Round about the Indian village
Spread the meadows and the corn-fields,
And beyond them stood the forest,
Stood thge roves of singing pine-trees,
Green in Summer, white in winter,
Ever sighing, ever singing. 50

"And the pleasant water-courses,

You could trace them through the valley,
By the rushing in the Spring-time,
By the alders in the Summer,
By the white fog in the Autumn,
By the black line in the Winter;
And beside them dwelt the singer,
In the vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley.

“There he sang of Hiawatha, 60
Sang the song of Hiawatha,
Sang his wondrous birth and being,
How he prayed and how he fasted,
How he lived, and toiled, and suffered,
That the tribes of men might prosper,
That he might advance his people!”

Ye who love the haunts of Nature,
Love the sunshine of the meadow,
Love the shadow of the forest, 70
Love the wind among the branches,
And the rain-shower and the snow-storm,
And the rushing of great rivers
Through their palisades of pine-trees,
And the thunder in the mountains,
Whose innumerable echoes
Flap like eagles in the eyries:—
Listen to these wild traditions,
To this Song of Hiawatha!

Ye who love a nation's legends,
Love the ballads of a people,

That like voices from after off
Call to us to pause and listen,
Speak in tones so plain and child-like,
Scarcely can the ear distinguish
Whether they are sung or spoken:—
Listen to this Indian Legend,
To this song of Hiawatha!

Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings
For the good they comprehend not,
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God's right hand in that darkness,
And are lifted up and strengthened:—
Listen to this simple story,
To this Song of Hiawatha!

90

100

Ye, who sometimes, in your rambles
Through the green lanes of the country,
Where the tangled barberry-bushes
Hang their tufts of crimson berries
Over stone walls gray with mosses,
Pause by some neglected graveyard,
For a while to muse, and ponder
On a half-effaced inscription,
Written with little skill of songcraft,

Homely phrases, but each letter 110
Full of hope and yet of heart-break,
Full of all the tender pathos
Of the Here and the Hereafter:—
Stay and read this rude inscription,
Read this song of Hiawatha!

HIAWATHA

(AN EXTRACT)

THEN the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter;
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges, 10
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid;
Talked with them when'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

Then Iagoo, the great boaster,
He the marvellous story-teller,
He the traveller and the talker,
He the friend of old Nokomis,

Made a bow for Hiawatha; 20
 From a branch of ash he made it,
 From an oak-bough made the arrows,
 Tipped with flint, and winged with feathers.
 And the cord he made of deer-skin.

Then he said to Hiawatha:
 "Go, my son, into the forest.
 Where the red deer herd together,
 Kill for us a famous roebuck.
 Kill for us a deer with antlers!"

Forth into the forest straightway 30
 All alone walked Hiawatha
 Proudly, with his bow and arrows;
 And the birds sang round him, o'er him,
 "Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!"

Sang the robin, the Opeechee,
 Sang the blue-bird, the Owaissa,
 "Do not shoot us, Hiawatha!"

Up the oak-tree, close beside him,
 Sprang the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
 In and out among the branches, 40
 Coughed and chattered from the oak-tree,
 Laughed, and said between his laughing,
 "Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!"

And the rabbit from his pathway
 Leaped aside and at a distance
 Sat erect upon his haunches,
 Half in fear and half in frolic,
 Saying to the little hunter,
 "Do not shoot me, Hiawatha!"

But he heeded not, nor heard them, 50
For his thoughts were with the red deer;
On their tracks his eyes were fastened,
Leading downward to the river,
To the ford across the river,
And as one in slumber walked he.

Hidden in the alder-bushes,
There he waited till the deer came,
Till he saw two antlers lifted,
Saw two eyes look from the thicket,
Saw two-nostrils point to wind-ward, 60
And a deer came down the pathway,
Flecked with leafy light and shadow.
And his heart within him fluttered,
Trembled like the leaves above him,
Like the birch-leaf palpitated,
As the deer came down the pathway.

Then, upon one knee uprising,
Hiawatha aimed an arrow ;
Scarce a twig moved with his motion,
Scarce a leaf was stirred or rustled ; 70
But the wary roebuck started,
Stamped with all his hoofs together,
Listened with one foot uplifted,
Leaped as if to meet the arrow.
Ah! the singing, fatal arrow,
Like a wasp it buzzed and stung him!

Dead he lay there in the forest,
By the ford across the river;
Beat his timid heart no longer,

But the heart of Hiawatha 80
Throbbled and shouted and exulted,
As he bore the red deer homeward,
And Iagoo and Nokomis
Hailed his coming with applauses.

From the red deer's hide Nokomis
Made a cloak for Hiawatha,
From the red deer's flesh Nokomis
Made a banquet to his honour,
All the village came and feasted,
All the guests praised Hiawatha. 90

A DUTCH PICTURE

SIMON DANZ has come home again,
From cruising about with his buccaneers;
He has singed the beard of the King of Spain,
And carried away the Dean of Jaen
And sold him in Algiers.

In his house by the Maese, with its roof of tiles
And weathercocks flying aloft in air,
There are silver tankards of antique styles,
Plunder of convent and castle, and piles
Of carpets rich and rare. 10

In his tulip-garden there by the town,
Overlooking the sluggish stream,
With his Moorish cap and dressing-gown,
The old sea-captain, hale and brown,
Walks in a waking dream.

A smile in his gray mustachio lurks

Whenever he thinks of the King of Spain,
And the listed tulips look like Turks,
And the silent gardener as he works
Is changed to the Dean of Jaen.

20

The windmills on the outermost

Verge of the landscape in the haze,
To him are towers on the Spanish coast,
With whiskered sentinels at their post,
Though this is the river Maese.

But when the winter rains begin,

He sits and smokes by the blazing brands,
And old seafaring men come in,
Goat-bearded, gray, and with double chin,
And rings upon their hands.

30

They sit there in the shadow and shine

Of the flickering fire of the winter night;
Figures in colour and design
Like those by Rembrandt of the Rhine,
Half darkness and half light.

And they talk of ventures lost or won,

And their talk is ever and ever the same,
While they drink the red wine of Tarragon,
From the cellars of some Spanish Don,
Or convent set on flame.

40

Restless at times, with heavy strides
He paces his parlour to and fro;
He is like a ship that at anchor rides
And swings with the rising and falling tides,
And tugs at her anchor-tow.

Voices mysterious far and near,
Sound of the wind and sound of the sea,
Are calling and whispering in his ear,
"Simon Danz! Why stayest thou here?
Come forth and follow me!"

50.

So he thinks he shall take to the sea again
For one more cruise with his buccaneers,
To singe the beard of the King of Spain,
And capture another Dean of Jaen
And sell him in Algiers.

TENNYSON

TITHONUS

THE woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapours weep their burthen to the ground,
Man comes and tills the earth and lies beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan.

Me only cruel immortality
Consumes: I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a dream
The ever silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.

10

Alas! for this gray shadow, once a man—
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seem'd
To his great heart none other than a God!
I ask'd thee, "Give me immortality."
Then didst thou grant mine asking with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how they give.
But thy strong Hours indignant work'd their wills,
And beat me down and marr'd and wasted me,
And tho' they could not end me, left me maim'd
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,—
Immortal age beside immortal youth,—

20

And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears
To hear me? Let me go : take back thy gift :
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?

30

A soft air fans the cloud apart ; there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.
Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,
And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,
And shake the darkness from their loosen'd manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

40

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true?
"The gods themselves cannot recall their gifts."

Ay me! ay me! with what another heart 50
In days far-off, and with what other eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that watch'd—
The lucid outline forming round thee, saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings,
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood
Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd all
Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids growing dewy-warm
With kisses balmier than half-opening buds
Of April, and could hear the lips that kiss'd 60
Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,
Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing
While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East:
How can my nature longer mix with thine?
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam
Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
Of happy men that have the power to die. 70
And grassy barrows of the happier dead,
Release me, and restore me to the ground;
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave;
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn;
I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

COLERIDGE

ON A CATARACT

(From a cavern near the summit of a Mountain precipice.)

UNPERISHING youth !
Thou leapest from forth
The call of thy hidden nativity;
Never mortal saw
The cradle of the strong one ;
Never mortal heard
The gathering of his voices ;
The deep-murmured charm of the son of the rock,
That is lisp'd evermore at his slumberless fountain.
There's a cloud at the portal, a spray-woven veil
At the shrine of his ceaseless renewing; 11
It embosoms the roses of dawn,
It entangles the shafts of the noon,
And into the bed of its stillness
The moonshine sinks down as in slumber,
That the son of the rock, that the nursling of
heaven
May be born in a holy twilight!

LOVE

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
 All are but ministers of Love,
 And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
 Live o'er again that happy hour,
 When midway on the mount I lay
 Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
 Had blended with the lights of eve;
 And she was there, my hope, my joy,
 My own dear Genevieve!

10

She lean'd against the arméd man,
 The statue of the arméd knight;
 She stood and listened to my lay,
 Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
 My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
 She loves me best, whene'er I sing
 The songs that make her grieve.

20

I played a soft and doleful air,
 I sang an old and moving story—
 An old rude song, that suited well
 That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land. 30

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face! 40

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night:

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright; 50
And that he knew it was a Fiend.
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land:—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate 60
The scorn that crazed his brain:—

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve; 70
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve:

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,

And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

80

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear.
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see.
The swelling of her heart.

90

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride:
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

LINES TO W. L.

(WHILE HE SANG A SONG TO PURCELL'S MUSIC.)

While my young cheek retains its healthful
hues,

And I have many friends who hold me dear;

Linley! methinks, I would not often hear
Such melodies as thine, lest I should lose
All memory of the wrongs and sore distress
For which my miserable brethren weep!

But should un comforted misfortunes steep
My daily bread in tears and bitterness;
And if at death's dread moment I should lie
With no beloved face at my bed-side 10
To fix the last glance of my closing eye,
Methinks, such strains, breathed by my angel-
guide.

Would make me pass the cup of anguish by,
Mix with the blest, nor know that I had died!

MRS. BROWNING

THE ROMAUNT OF THE PAGE

I

A KNIGHT of gallant deeds
And a young page at his side,
From the holy war'in Palestine
Did slow and thoughtful ride,
As each were a palmer and told for beads
The dews of the eventide.

II

"O young page," said the knight,
"A noble page art thou!
Thou fearest not to steep in blood
The curls upon thy brow; 10
And once in the tent, and twice in the fight,
Didst ward me a mortal blow."

III

"O brave knight," said the page,
"Or ere we hither came,
We talked in tent, we talked in field,
Of the bloody battle-game;
But here, below this greenwood bough,
I cannot speak the same.

IV

"Our troop is far behind,
The woodland calm is new; 20
Our steeds, with slow grass-muffled hoofs,

Tread deep the shadows through;
And in my mind, some blessing kind
Is dropping with the dew.

V

"The woodland calm is pure—
I cannot choose but have
A thought, from these, o' the beechen-trees
Which in our England wave;
And of the little finches fine
Which sang there while in Palestine
The warrior-hilt we drive.

30

VI

"Methinks, a moment gone,
I heard my mother pray!
I heard, sir knight, the prayer for *me*
Wherein she passed away;
And I know the Heavens are leaning down
To hear what I shall say."

VII

The page spake calm and high,
As of no mean degree;
Perhaps he felt in nature's broad
Full heart, his own was free;
And the knight looked up to his lifted eye,
Then answered smilingly:—

40

VIII

"Sir page, I pray your grace!
Certes, I meant not so
To cross your pastoral mood, sir page,

With the crook of the battle-bow;
But a knight may speak of a lady's face,
I ween, in any mood or place,
If the grasses die or grow.

50

IX

"And this I meant to say,—
My lady's face shall shine,
As ladies' faces use, to greet
My page from Palestine;
Or, speak she fair or prank she gay,
She is no lady of mine.

X

"And this I meant to fear,—
Her bower may suit thee ill!
For, sooth, in that same field and tent,
Thy *talk* was somewhat still;
And fitter thy hand for my knightly spear,
Than thy tongue for my lady's will."

60

XI

Slowly and thankfully
The young page bowed his head:
His large eyes seemed to muse a smile,
Until he blushed instead,
And no lady in her bower, pardie,
Could blush more sudden red—
"Sir knight,—thy lady's bower to me
Is suited well," he said.

70

XII

"*Beati, beati, mortui !*"—
From the convent on the sea,

One mile off, or scarce as nigh,
 Swells the dirge as clear and high
 As if that, over brake and lea,
 Bodily the wind did carry
 The great altar of St. Mary,
 And the fifty tapers burning o'er it,
 And the Lady Abbess dead before it,
 And the chanting nuns whom yesterweek 80
 Her voice did charge and bless—
 Chanting steady, chanting meek,
 Chanting with a solemn breath
 Because that they are thinking less
 Upon the Dead than upon death!
 "*Beati, beati, mortui!*"
 Now the vision in the sound
 Wheeleth on the wind around—
 Now it sweepeth back, away— 90
 The uplands will not let it stay
 To dark the western sun.
Mortui!—away at last,—
 Or ere the page's blush is past!
 And the knight heard all, and the page heard none.

XIII

"A boon, thou noble knight,
 If ever I served thee!
 Though thou art a knight and I am a page,
 Now grant a boon to me—
 And tell me sooth, if dark or bright,

If little loved, or loved aright,
Be the face of thy ladye.” 100

XIV

Gloomily looked the knight;—
“As a son thou hast served me,
And would to none I had granted boon,
Except to only thee!
For haply then I should love aright,
For then I should know if dark or bright
Were the face of my ladye.

XV

“Yet ill it suits my knightly tongue
To grudge that granted boon! 110
That heavy price from heart and life
I paid in silence down:
The hand that claimed it, cleared in fine
My father’s fame: I swear by mine,
That price was nobly won!

XVI

“Earl Walter was a brave old earl,—
He was my father’s friend;
And while I rode the lists at Court,
And little guessed the end,
My noble father in his shroud 120
Against a slanderer lying loud
He rose up to defend.

XVII

“Oh, calm below the marble grey

My father's dust was strown!
 Oh, meek above the marble grey
 His image prayed alone!
 The slanderer lied—the wretch was brave,—
 For, looking up the minster-nave,
 He saw my father's knightly glaive
 Was changed from steel to stone.

130

XVIII

“But Earl Walter's glaive was steel,
 With a brave old hand to wear it,
 And dashed the lie back in the mouth
 Which lied against the godly truth
 And against the knightly merit!
 The slanderer, 'neath the avenger's heel,
 Struck up the dagger in appeal
 From stealthy lie to brutal force—
 And out upon the traitor's corse
 Was yielded the true spirit.

140

XIX

“I would mine hand had fought that fight
 And justified my father!
 I would mine heart had caught that wound
 And slept beside him rather!
 I think it were a better thing
 Than murdered friend and marriage-ring
 Forced on my life together.

XX

“Wail shook Earl Walter's house—
 His true wife shed no tear—

She lay upon her bed as mute 150
As the earl did on his bier :
Till —‘ Ride, ride fast,’ she said at last,
‘And bring the avengéd’s son anear !
Ride fast—ride free, as a dart can flee,
For white of blé with waiting for me
Is the corse in the next chambére.’

XXI

“I came—I knelt beside her bed—
Her calm was worse than strife—
‘My husband, for thy father dear,
Gave freely when thou wert not here 160
His own and eke my life.
A boon ! Of that sweet child we make
An orphan for thy father’s sake,
Make thou, for ours, a wife.’

XXII

“I said, ‘My steed neighs in the court,
My bark rocks on the brine,
And the warrior’s vow I am under now
To free the pilgrim’s shrine ;
But fetch the ring and fetch the priest
And call that daughter of thine, 170
And rule she wide from my castle on Nyde
While I am in Palestine.’

XXIII

“In the dark chambére, if the bride was fair,
Ye wis, I could not see,

But the steed thrice neighed, and the priest fast
prayed,

And wedded fast were we.

Her mother smiled upon her bed

As at its side we knelt to wed,

And the bride rose from her knee

And kissed the smile of her mother dead, 180

Or ever she kissed me.

XXIV

“My page, my page, what grieves thee so,

That the tears run down thy face?”—

“Alas, alas ! mine own sistér

Was in thy lady’s case !

But *she* laid down the silks she wore

And followed him she wed before,

Disguised as his true servitor,

To the very battle-place.’

XXV

And wept the page, and laughed the knight,—190

A careless laugh laughed he :

“Well done it were for thy sistér,

But not for my ladye !

My love, so please you, shall requite

No woman, whether dark or bright,

Unwomaned if she be.”

XXVI

The page stopped weeping and smiled cold—

“Your wisdom may declare

That womanhood is proved the best
By golden brooch and glossy vest 200
The mincing ladies wear ;
Yet is it proved, and was of old,
Anear as well, I dare to hold,
By truth, or by despair."

XXVII

He smiled no more, he wept no more,
But passionate he spake,—
"Oh, womanly she prayed in tent,
When none beside did wake!
Oh, womanly she paled in fight,
For one beloved's sake!— 210
And her little hand, defiled with blood,
Her tender tears of womanhood
Most woman-pure did make !"

XXVIII

"—Well done it were for thy sister,
Thou tellest well her tale !
But for my lady, she shall pray
I' the kirk of Nydesdale ;
Not dread for me but love for me
Shall make my lady pale ;
No casque shall hide her woman's tear— 220
It shall have room to trickle clear
Behind her woman's veil."

XXIX

"-- But what if she mistook thy mind
And followed thee to strife,

Then kneeling, did entreat thy love,
 As Paynims ask for life ?”
 “—I would forgive, and evermore
 Would love her as my servitor,
 But little as my wife.

XXX

“Look up—there is a small bright cloud 230
 Alone amid the skies !
 So high, so pure, and so apart,
 A woman’s honour lies.”
 The page looked up—the cloud was sheen—
 A sadder cloud did rush, I ween,
 Betwixt it and his eyes.

XXXI

Then dimly dropped his eyes away
 From welkin unto hill—
 Ha ! who rides there?—the page is ’ware,
 Though the cry at his heart is still ! 240
 And the page seeth all and the knight seeth none,
 Though banner and spear do fleck the sun,
 And the Saracens ride at will.

XXXII

He speaketh calm, he speaketh low,—
 “Ride fast, my master, ride,
 Or ere within the broadening dark
 The narrow shadows hide !”
 “Yea, fast, my page, I will do so
 And keep thou at my side.”

XXXIII

“ Now nay, now nay, ride on thy way. 250
Thy faithful page precede!
For I must loose on saddle-bow
My battle-casque, that galls, I trow,
The shoulder of my steed;
And I must pray, as I did vow,
For one in bitter need.

XXXIV

“ Ere night I shall be near to thee,—
Now ride, my master, ride!
Ere night, as parted spirits cleave
To mortals too beloved to leave, 260
I shall be at thy side.”
The knight smiled free at the fantasy,
And adown the dell did ride.

XXXV

Had the knight looked up to the page's face,
No smile the word had won:
Had the knight looked up to the page's face,
I ween he had never gone:
Had the knight looked back to the page's geste,
I ween he had turned anon:
For dread was the woe in the face so young, 270
And wild was the silent geste that flung
Casque, sword to earth—as the boy down-sprung,
And stood—alone, alone. /

He clenched his hands as if to hold
 His soul's great agony—
 "Have I renounced my womanhood,
 For wifehood unto *thee*,
 And is this the last, last look of thine
 That ever I shall see?

XXXVII

"Yet God thee save, and mayst thou have 280
 A lady to thy mind,
 More woman-proud and half as true
 As one thou leav'st behind!
 And God me take with HIM to dwell—
 For HIM I cannot love too well,
 As I have loved my kind."

XXXVIII

SHE looketh up in earth's despair,
 The hopeful Heavens to seek:
 That little cloud still floateth there,
 Whereof her Loved did speak. 290
 How bright the little cloud appears!
 Her eyelids fall upon the tears,
 And the tears down either cheek.

XXXIX

The tramp of hoof, the flash of steel—
 The Paynims round her coming!
 The sound and sight have made her calm,—
 False page, but truthful woman!

She stands amid them all unmoved:

A heart once broken by the loved

Is strong to meet the foeman.

300

XL

“Ho, Christian page! art keeping sheep,

From pouring wine-cups resting?”—

“I keep my master’s noble name,

For warring, not for feasting;

And if that here Sir Hubert were,

My master brave, my master dear,

Ye would not stay to question.”

XLI

“Where is thy master, scornful page,

That we may slay or bind him?”—

“Now search the lea and search the wood, 310

And see if ye can find him!

Nathless, as hath been often tried,

Your Paynim heroes faster ride

Before him than behind him.”

XLII

“Give smoother answers, lying page,

Or perish in the lying.”—

“I trow that if the warrior brand

Beside my foot, were in my hand,

’Twere better at replying.”

They cursed her deep, they smote her low, 320

They cleft her golden ringlets through;

The Loving is the Dying.

XLIII

She felt the scimitar gleam down,
 And met it from beneath,
 With smile more bright in victory
 Than any sword from sheath,—
 Which flashed across her lip serene,
 Most like the spirit-light between
 The darks of life and death.

XLIV

“*Ingemisco, ingemisco!*” 330
 From the convent on the sea,
 Now it sweepeth solemnly!
 As over wood and over lea
 Bodily the wind did carry
 The great altar of St. Mary,
 And the fifty tapers paling o’er it,
 And the Lady Abbess stark before it,
 And the weary nuns, with hearts that faintly
 Beat along their voices saintly—
 “*Ingemisco, ingemisco!*” 340
 Dirge for abbess laid in shroud;
 Sweepeth o’er the shroudless Dead,
 Page or lady, as we said,
 With the dew upon her head,
 All as sad if not as loud.
 “*Ingemisco, ingemisco!*”
 Is ever a lament begun
 By any mourner under sun,
 Which, ere it endeth, suits but *one*?

BURNS

MY BONNIE MARY

I

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
An' fill it in a silver tassie;
That I may drink, before I go,
A service to my bonnie lassie;
That boat rocks at the pier o' Leith;
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry:
The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
And I maun leave my bonnie-Mary.

II

The trumpets sound, the banners fly.
The glittering spears are rankéd ready: 10
The shouts o' war are heard afar.
The battle closes thick and bloody!
But it's not the roar o' sea or shore
Wad make me langer wish to tarry:
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

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She felt the scimitar gleam down,
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Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

CAMPBELL

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A chieftain to the Highlands bound
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound,
To row us o'er the ferry!"

—"Now, who be ye would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"

—"O I'm the chief of Ulva's Isle,
And this Lord Ullin's daughter.

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

10

"His horsemen hard behind us ride;
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride,
When they have slain her lover?"

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief—I'm ready;
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady:

20

“And, by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry.”

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking:
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armed men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

30

“O haste thee, haste!” the lady cries,
“Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father.”

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her—
When, oh! too strong for human hand,
The tempest gathered o'er her.

40

And still they rowed amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore—
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For sore dismayed, through storm and shade,
His child he did discover:
One lovely hand she stretched for aid,
And one was round her lover.

“Come back! come back!” he cried in grief,
“Across this stormy water; 50
And I’ll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—O my daughter!”

’Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore,
Return or aid preventing:
The waters wild went o’er his child—
And he was left lamenting.

LOWELL

AMBROSE

NEVER, surely, was holier man
Than Ambrose, since the world began;
With diet spare and raiment thin,
He shielded himself from the father of sin;
With bed of iron and scourgings oft,
His heart to God's hand as wax made soft.
Through earnest prayer and watchings long
He sought to know 'twixt right and wrong,
Much wrestling with the blessed Word
To make it yield the sense of the Lord,
That he might build a storm-proof creed
To fold the flock in at their need.

10

At last he builded a perfect faith,
Fenced round about with *The Lord thus saith* :
To himself he fitted the doorway's size,
Meted the light to the need of his eyes,
And knew, by a sure and inward sign,
That the work of his fingers was divine.
Then Ambrose said, "All those shall die
The eternal death who believe not as I;"
And some were boiled, some burned in fire,
Some sawn in twain, that his heart's desire,

20

For the good of men's souls, might be satisfied,
By the drawing of all to the righteous side.

One day, as Ambrose was seeking the truth
In his lonely walk, he saw a youth
Resting himself in the shade of a tree;
It had never been given him to see
So shining a face, and the good man thought
'Twere pity he should not believe as he ought. 30

So he set himself by the young man's side,
And the state of his soul with questions tried;
But the heart of the stranger was hardened indeed,
Nor received the stamp of the one true creed;
And the spirit of Ambrose waxed sore to find
Such face the porch of so narrow a mind.

"As each beholds in cloud and fire
The shape that answers his own desire,
So each," said the youth, "in the Law shall find
The figure and features of his mind; 40
And to each in His mercy hath God allowed
His several pillar of fire and cloud."

The soul of Ambrose burned with zeal
And holy wrath for the young man's weal:
"Believest thou then, most wretched youth,
Cried he, "a dividual essence in Truth?
I fear me thy heart is too cramped with sin
To take the Lord in His glory in."

Now there bubbled beside them where they stood.
A fountain of waters sweet and good: 50
The youth to the streamlet's brink drew near
Saying, "Ambrose, thou maker of creeds, look
here!"

Six vases of crystal then he took.
And set them along the edge of the brook.

"As into these vessels the water I pour,
There shall one hold less, another more,
And the water unchanged, in every case.
Shall put on the figure of the vase:
O thou, who wouldst unity make through strife,
Canst thou fit this sign to the Water of Life?" 60

When Ambrose looked up, he stood alone,
The youth and the stream and the vases were gone,
But he knew, by a sense of humble grace,
He had talked with an angel face to face,
And felt his heart change inwardly,
As he fell on his knees beneath the tree.

EDWIN ARNOLD

THE LIGHT OF ASIA

(AN EXTRACT)

BUT the sad King

Marvelled, and gave command that new delights
Be compassed to enthral Siddártha's heart
Amid those dancers of his pleasure-house;
Also he set at all the brazen doors
A double guard.

Yet who shall shut out Fate?

For once again the spirit of the Prince
Was moved to see this world beyond his gates,
This life of man, so pleasant, if its waves
Ran not to waste and woful finishing
In Time's dry sands. "I pray you let me view
Our city as it is," such was his prayer
To King Suddhódana. "Your Majesty
In tender heed hath warned the folk before
To put away ill things and common sights,
And make their faces glad to gladden me,
And all the causeways gay; yet have I learned
This is not daily life, and if I stand
Nearest, my father, to the realm and thee,
Fain would I know the people and the streets,

10

20

Their simple usual way and workday deeds,
And lives which those men live who are not kings.
Give me good leave, dear Lord ! to pass unknown
Beyond my happy gardens ; I shall come
The more contented to their peace again,
Or, wiser, father, if not well content.
Therefore, I pray thee, let me go at will
To-morrow, with my servants, through the streets."
And the King said, amidst his Ministers,
"Belike this second flight may mend the first. 30
Note how the falcon starts at every sight
New from his hood, but what a quiet eye
Cometh of freedom ; let my son see all,
And bid them bring me tidings of his mind."

Thus on the morrow, when the noon was come,
The Prince and Channa passed beyond the gates,
Which opened to the signet of the King ;
Yet knew not they who rolled the great doors back
It was the King's son in that merchant's robe,
And in the clerkly dress his charioteer. 40
Forth fared they by the common way afoot,
Mingling with all the Sākya citizens,
Seeing the glad and sad things of the town :
The painted streets alive with hum of noon,
The traders cross-legged, mid their spice and grain,
The buyers with their money in the cloth,
The war of words to cheapen this or that
The shout to clear the road, the huge stone wheels
The strong slow oxen and their rustling loads,

The singing bearers with the palanquins, 50
The broad-necked hamals sweating in the sun,
The housewives bearing water from the well
With balanced chatties, and athwart their hips
The black-eyed babes; the fly-swarmed sweetmeat
shops,

The weaver at his loom, the cotton-bow
Twanging, the millstones grinding meal, the dogs
Prowling for oris, the skulful armourer
With tong and hammer linking suirs of mail,
The blacksmith with a mattock and a spear
Reddening together in his coals, the school 60
Where round their Guru, in a grave half-moon,
The Sákya children sang the mantras through,
And learned the greater and the lesser gods ;
The dyers stretching waistcloths in the sun
Wet from the vats—orange, and rose, and green ;
The soldiers clanking past with swords and shields,
The camel-drivers rocking on the humps,
The Brahman proud, the martial Kshatriya,
The humble toiling Sudra ; here a throng
Gathered to watch some chattering snake-tamer 70
Wind round his wrist the living jewellery
Of asp and nág, or charm the hooded death
To angry dance with drone of beaded gourd ;
There a long line of drums and horns, which went
With steeds gay painted and silk canopies,
To bring the young bride home ; and here a wife
Stealing w th cakes and garlands to th. god

To pray her husband's safe return from trade,
 Or beg a boy next birth ; hard by the booths
 Where the swart potters beat the noisy brass 80
 For lamps and lotas ; thence by temple walls
 And gateways, to the river and the bridge
 Under the city walls.

These had they passed

When from the roadside moaned a mournful voice,
 "Help, masters ! lift me to my feet ; oh, help !
 Or I shall die before I reach my house !"
 A stricken wretch it was, whose quivering frame,
 Caught by some deadly plague, lay in the dust
 Writhing, with fiery purple blotches specked ; 90
 The chill sweat beaded on his brow, his mouth
 Was dragged away with twitchings of sore pain,
 The wild eyes swam with inward agony.
 Gasping, he clutched the grass to rise, and rose
 Half-way, then sank, with quaking feeble limbs
 And scream of terror, crying, "Ah, the pain !
 Good people, help !" whereon Sidhārtha ran,
 Lifted the woful man with tender hands,
 With sweet looks laid the sick head on his knee
 And, while his soft touch comforted the wretch, 100
 Asked, "Brother, what is ill with thee ? what harm
 Hath fallen ? wherefore can'st thou not arise ?
 Why is it, Channa, that he pants and moans,
 And gasps to speak, and sighs so pitiful ?"
 Then spake the chariotceer : "Great Prince ! this man

Is smitten with some pest ; his elements
Are all confounded ; in his veins the blood,
Which ran a wholesome river, leaps and boils,
A fiery flood ; his heart, which kept good time.
Beats like an ill-played drum-skin, quick and slow ; 110
His sinews slacken like a bowstring slipped ;
The strength is gone from ham, and loin, and neck,
And all the grace and joy of manhood fled :
This is a sick man with the fit upon him.
See how he plucks and plucks to ease his grief,
And rolls his bloodshot orbs, and grinds his teeth,
And draws his breath as if 'twere choking smoke !
Lo ! now he would be dead ; but shall not die
Until the plague hath had its work in him,
Killing the nerves which die before the life ; 120
Then, when his strings have cracked with agony
And all his bones are empty of the sense
To ache, the plague will quit and light elsewhere.
Oh, sir ! it is not good to hold him so !
The harm may pass, and strike thee, even thee."
But spake the Prince, still comforting the man ?
"And are there others, are there many thus ?
Or might it be to me as now with him ?"
"Great Lord ! " answered the charioteer, "this comes
In many forms to all men ; griefs and wounds, 130
Sickness and tetters, palsies, leprosies,
Hot fever, watery wastings, issues, blains
Befall all flesh and enter everywhere."
"Come such ills unobserved ?" the Prince enquired.

And Channa said, "Like the sly snake they come .
That stings unseen; like the striped murderer,
Who waits to spring from the Karunda bush,
Hiding beside the jungle path; or like
The lightning, striking these and sparing those,
As chance may send." 140

"Then all men live in fear?"

"So live they, prince!"

"And none can say, 'I sleep
Happy and whole to-night, and so shall wake'?"
"None say it."

"And the end of many aches,
Which come unseen, and will come when they come,
Is this, a broken body and sad mind,
And so old age?"

"Yea, if men last as long."

"But if they cannot bear their agonies,
Or if they will not bear, and seek a term;
Or if they bear, and be, as this man is
Too weak except for groans, and so still live, 150
And growing old, grow older, then—what end?"
"They die. Prince."

"Die?"

"Yea, at the last comes Death,
In whatsoever way, whatever hour.
Some few grow old, most suffer and fall sick,
But all must die—behold, where comes the Dead!"
Then did Siddārtha raise his eyes, and see
Fast pacing towards the river-brink a band

Of wailing people; foremost one who swung
An earthen bowl with lighted coals; behind
The kinsmen, shorn, with mourning marks, ungirt, 160
Crying aloud, "O Rama, Rama, hear!
Call upon Rama, brothers;" next the bier,
Knit of four poles with bamboos interlaced,
Whereon lay—stark and stiff, feet foremost, lean,
Chapfallen, sightless, hollow-flanked, a-grin,
Sprinkled with red and yellow dust—the Dead,
Whom at the four-went ways they turned head first,
And crying "Rama, Rama!" carried on
To where a pit was reared beside the stream;
Thereon they laid him, building fuel up— 170
Good sleep hath one that slumbers on that bed!
He shall not wake for cold, albeit he lies
Naked to all the airs—for soon they set
The red flame to the corners four, which crept,
And licked, and flickered, finding out his flesh
And feeding on it with swift hissing tongues,
And crackle of parched skin, and snap of joint;
Till the fat smoke thinned and the ashes sank
Scarlet and grey, with here and there a bone
White midst the grey—the total of the man. 180

Then spake the Prince: "Is this the end which comes
To all who live?"

"This is the end that comes
To all," quoth Channa; "he upon the pyre—
Whose remnants are so petty that the crows

Caw hungrily, then quit the fruitless feast—
Ate, drank, laughed, loved and lived, and liked life well.
Then came—who knows?—some gust of jungle wind,
A stumble on the path, a taint in the tank.
A snake's nip, half a span of angry steel,
A chill, a fish bone, or a falling tile, 190
And life was over and the man is dead.
No appetites, no pleasures, and no pains
Hath such; the kiss upon his lips is nought,
The fire-scorch nought; he smelleth not his flesh
A-roast, nor yet the sandal and the spice
They burn; the taste is emptied from his mouth,
The hearing of his ears is clogged, the sight
Is blinded in his eyes; those whom he loved
Wail desolate, for even that must go,
The body which was lamp unto the life. 200
Or worms will have a horrid feast of it.
Here is the common destiny of flesh:
The high and low, the good and bad, must die,
And then, 'tis taught, begin anew and live
Somewhere, somehow—who knows?—and so again
The pangs, the parting, and the lighted pile:—
Such is man's round."

But lo! Siddārtha turned
Eyes gleaming with divine tears to the sky,
Eyes lit with heavenly pity to the earth;
From sky to earth he looked, from earth to sky, 210
As if his spirit sought in lonely flight
Some far-off vision, linking this and that,

Lost—past—but searchable, but seen, but known.
 Then cried he, while his lifted countenance
 Glowed with the burning passion of a love
 Unspeakable, the ardour of a hope
 Boundless, insatiate: "Oh! suffering world;
 Oh! known and unknown of my common flesh,
 Caught in this common net of death and woe.
 And life which binds to both! I see, I feel 220
 The vastness of the agony of earth.
 The vanness of its joys, the mockery
 Of all its best, the anguish of its worst:
 Since pleasure ends in pain, and youth in age.
 And love in loss, and life in hateful death,
 And death in unknown lives, which will but yoke
 Men to their wheel again to whirl the round
 Of false delights and woes that are not false.
 Me too this lure hath cheated, so it seemed
 Lovely to live, and life a sunlit stream 230
 For ever flowing in a changeless peace;
 Whereas the foolish ripple of the flood
 Dances so lightly down by bloom and lawn
 Only to pour its crystal quicker
 Into the foul salt sea. The veil is rent
 Which blinded me! I am as all these men
 Who cry upon their gods and are not heard,
 Or are not heeded—yet there must be aid!
 For them, and me and all there must be help!
 Perchance the gods have need of help themselves. 240
 Being so feeble that when sad lips cry

They cannot save ! I would not let one cry
Whom I could save ! How can it be that Brahm
Would make a world and keep it miserable,
Since, if, all-powerful, he leaves it so,
He is not good, and if not powerful,
He is not God ?—Channa, lead home again !
It is enough ! mine eyes have seen enough !”

Which when the King heard, at the gates he set
A triple guard ; and bade no man should pass 240
By day or night, issuing or entering in,
Until the days were numbered of that dream.

TENNYSON

THE KRAKEN

BELOW the thunders of the upper deep;
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep
The Kraken sleepeth; faintest sunlights flee
About his shadowy sides; above him swell
Huge sponges of millennial growth and height;
And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous grot and secret cell
Unnumber'd and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering green. 10
There hath he lain for ages and will lie
Battening upon huge seaworms in his sleep,
Until the latter fire shall heat the deep;
Then once by men and angels to be seen,
In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die.

LONGFELLOW

THE MUSICIAN'S TALE

THE BALLAD OF CARMILHAN

I

At Stralsund, by the Baltic Sea,

Within the sandy bar,
At sunset of a summer's day.
Ready for sea, at anchor lay
The good ship Valdemar.

The sunbeams danced upon the waves,
And played along her side;
And through the cabin windows streamed
In ripples of golden light, that seemed
The ripple of the tide.

10

There sat the captain with his friends,
Old skippers brown and hale,
Who smoked and grumbled o'er their grog,
And talked of iceberg and of fog,
Of calm and storm and gale.

And one was spinning a sailor's yarn
About Klaboterman,
The Kobold of the sea; a sprite
Invisible to mortal sight,
Who o'er the rigging ran.

20

Sometimes he hammered in the hold
Sometimes upon the mast,
Sometimes abeam, sometimes abaft,
Or at the bows he sang and laughed,
And made all tight and fast.

He helped the sailors at their work,
And toiled with jovial din;
He helped them hoist and reef the sails,
He helped them stow the casks and bales.
And heave the anchor in.

30

But woe unto the lazy louts,
The idlers of the crew;
Them to torment was his delight,
And worry them by day and night,
And pinch them black and blue.

And woe to him whose mortal eyes
Klaboterman behold.
It is a certain sign of death!—
The cabin-boy here held his breath,
He felt his blood run cold.

40

II

The jolly skipper paused awhile,
And then again began;
"There is a Spectre Ship," quoth he,
"A Ship of the Dead that sails the sea,
And is called the Carmilhan.

'A ghostly ship, with a ghostly crew,

In tempests she appears;

And before the gale, or against the gale,

She sails without a rag of sail,

Without a helmsman steers.

50

"She haunts the Atlantic north and south,

But mostly the mid-sea,

Where three great rocks rise bleak and bare,

Like furnace chimneys in the air,

And are called the Chimneys Three.

"And ill betide the luckless ship

That meets the Carmilhan;

Over her decks the seas will leap.

She must go down into the deep,

And perish mouse and man."

60

The captain of the Valdemar

Laughed loud with merry heart.

"I should like to see this ship," said he;

"I should like to find these Chimneys Three

That are marked down in the chart.

"I have sailed right over the spot," he said,

With a good stiff breeze behind,

When the sea was blue, and the sky was clear,—

You can follow my course by these pinholes here,—

And never a rock could find."

70

And then he swore a dreadful oath,
He swore by the Kingdoms Three,
That, should he meet the Carmilhan,
He would run her down, although he ran
Right into Eternity!

All this, while passing to and fro,
The cabin-boy had heard;
He lingered at the door to hear,
And drank in all with greedy ear,
And pondered every word.

80

He was a simple country lad,
But of a roving mind.
"Oh, it must be like heaven," thought he,
"Those far-off foreign lands to see,
And fortune seek and find!"

But in the fo'castle, when he heard
The mariners blaspheme,
He thought of home, he thought of God,
And his mother under the churchyard sod,
And wished it were a dream.

90

One friend on board that ship had he;
'Twas the Klaboterman,
Who saw the Bible in his chest,
And made a sign upon his breast,
All evil things to ban.

III

The cabin windows have grown blank

As eyeballs of the dead;

No more the glancing sunbeams burn

On the gilt letters of the stern,

But on the figure-head;

100

On Valdemar Victorious,

Who looketh with disdain

To see his image in the tide

Dismembered float from side to side,

And reunite again.

"It is the wind," those skippers said,

"That swings the vessel so;

It is the wind; it freshens fast,

'Tis time to say farewell at last,

'Tis time for us to go."

110

They shook the captain by the hand,

"Good luck! good luck!" they cried;

Each face was like the setting sun,

As, broad and red, they one by one

Went o'er the vessel's side.

The sun went down, the full moon rose,

Serene o'er field and flood;

And all the winding creeks and bays

And broad sea-meadows seemed ablaze,

The sky was red as blood.

120

The south-west wind blew fresh and fair,
As fair as wind could be;
Bound for Odessa, o'er the bar,
With all sail set, the Valdemar
Went proudly out to sea.

130

The lovely moon climbs up the sky
As one who walks in dreams;
A tower of marble in her light,
A wall of black, a wall of white,
The stately vessel seems.

Low down upon the sandy coast
The lights begin to burn;
And now, uplifted high in air,
They kindle with a fiercer glare,
And now drop far astern.

140

The dawn appears, the land is gone,
The sea is all around;
Then on each hand low hills of sand
Emerge and form another land:
She steereth through the Sound.

Through Kattegat and Skager-rack
She flitteth like a ghost;
By day and night, by night and day,
She bounds, she flies upon her way
Along the English coast.

150

Cape Finisterre is drawing near,
Cape Finisterre is past:

Into the open ocean stream
She floats, the vision of a dream
Too beautiful to last.

Suns rise and set, and rise, and yet
There is no land in sight;
The liquid planets overhead
Burn brighter now the moon is dead.
And longer stays the night.

160

IV

And now along the horizon's edge
Mountains of cloud uprose;
Black as with forests underneath,
Above, their sharp and jagged teeth
Were white as drifted snows.

Unseen behind them sank the sun,
But flushed each snowy peak
A little while with rosy light,
That faded slowly from the sight
As blushes from the cheek.

170

Black grew the sky,—all black, all black;
The clouds were everywhere;
There was a feeling of suspense
In nature, a mysterious sense
Of terror in the air.

And all on board the Valdemar
Was still as still could be;

Save when the dismal ship-bell tolled,
As ever and anon she rolled,
And lurched into the sea. 180

The captain up and down the deck
Went striding to and fro ;
Now watched the compass at the wheel,
Now lifted up his hand to feel
Which way the wind might blow.

And now he looked up at the sails,
And now upon the deep ;
In every fibre of his frame
He felt the storm before it came ;
He had no thought of sleep. 190

Eight bells ! and suddenly abaft,
With a great rush of rain,
Making the ocean white with spume,
In darkness like the day of doom,
On came the hurricane.

The lightning flashed from cloud to cloud,
And rent the sky in two ;
A jagged flame, a single jet
Of white fire, like a bayonet,
That pierced the eyeballs through. 200

Then all around was dark again,
And blacker than before ;
But in that single flash of light

He had beheld a fearful sight,
And thought of the oath he swore.

For right ahead lay the Ship of the Dead,
The ghostly Carmilhan!
Her masts were stripped, her yards were bare,
And on her bowsprit, poised in air,
Sat the Klaboterman.

210

Her crew of ghosts was all on deck,
Or clambering up the shrouds;
The boatswain's whistle, the captain's hail,
Were like the piping of the gale.
And thunder in the clouds.

And close behind the Carmilhan
There rose up from the sea,
As from a foundered ship of stone,
Three bare and splintered masts alone;
They were the Chimneys Three!

220

And onward dashed the Valdemar,
And leaped into the dark;
A denser mist, a colder blast,
A little shudder, and she had passed
Right through the Phantom Bark.

She cleft in twain the shadowy hulk,
But cleft it unaware;
As when, careering to her nest,

The sea-gull severs with her breast
The unresisting air.

230

Again the lightning flashed; again
They saw the Carmilhan,
Whole as before in hull and spar;
But now on board of the Valdemar
Stood the Klaboterman.

And they all knew their doom was sealed;
They knew that death was near;
Some prayed who never prayed before,
And some they wept, and some they swore,
And some were mute with fear.

240

Then suddenly there came a shock,
And louder than wind or sea
A cry burst from the crew on deck,
As she dashed and crashed, a hopeless wreck,
Upon the Chimneys Three.

The storm and night were passed, the light
To streak the east began;
The cabin-boy, picked up at sea,
Survived the wreck, and only he,
To tell of the Carmilhan.

250

TENNYSON

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By his still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly. Both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Through scudding drifts the rainy Hyades 10
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro' 19
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As though to breathe were life. Life piled on life

Dreary gleams about the moorland
flying over Locksley Hall :
Locksley Hall, that in the distance
overlooks the sandy tracts—
And the hollow ocean-ridges
roaring into cataracts.
Many a night from yonder ivied
easement, ere I went to rest.
Did I look on great Orion
sloping slowly to the West.
Many a night I saw the Pleiads,
rising through the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies
tangled in a silver braid. 10
Here about the beach I wander'd,
nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science,
and the long result of Time ;
When the centuries behind me
like a fruitful land reposed ;
When I clung to all the present
for the promise that it closed :
When I dipt into the future
far as human eye could see :
Saw the Vision of the world,
and all the wonder that would be.—

In the spring a fuller crimson
comes upon the robin's breast ;

In the spring the wanton lapwing
gets himself another crest ;

In the spring a livelier iris
changes on the burnish'd dove ;

In the spring a young man's fancy
lightly turns to thoughts of love. 20

Then her cheek was pale and thinner
than should be for one so young,

And her eyes on all my motions
with a mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy,
speak, and speak the truth to me,

Trust me, cousin, all the current
of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead
came a colour and a light,

As I have seen the rosy red
flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken
with a sudden storm of sighs—

All the spirit deeply dawning
in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings,
fearing they should do me wrong ;"

Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin ?"
weeping, "I have loved thee long." 30

Love took up the glass of Time,
and turn'd it in his glowing hands :

Every moment, lightly shaken,
ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life,
and smote on all the chords with might ;

Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,
pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland
did we hear the copses ring,

And her whisper throng'd my pulses
with the fulness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters
did we watch the stately ships,

And our spirits rush'd together
at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted !
O my Amy, mine no more !

O the dreary, dreary moorland !
O the barren, barren shore ! 40

Falsely than all fancy fathoms,
falsely than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat,
and servile to a shrewish tongue!
Is it well to wish thee happy?—
having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings
and a narrower heart than mine!
Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower
to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing
coarse to sympathise with clay.
As the husband is, the wife is:
thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature
will have weight to drag thee down.
He will hold thee, when his passion
shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog,
a little dearer than his horse.
What is this? his eyes are heavy:
think not they are glazed with wine;
Go to him: it is thy duty:
kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary,
that his brain is over wrought.

Soothe him with thy finer fancies,
touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose,
easy things to understand—

Better thou wert dead before me,
though I slew thee with my hand!—

Better thou and I were lying,
hidden from the heart's disgrace,

Roll'd in one another's arms,
and silent in a last embrace.

'Cursed be the social wants
that sin against the strength of youth!

Cursed be the social lies
that warp us from the living truth! 60

Cursed be the sickly forms
that err from honest Nature's rule!

Cursed be the gold that gilds
the straiten'd forehead of the fool! /

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!
—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—

Would to God— for I had loved thee
more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish
that which bears but bitter fruit?

I will pluck it from my bosom,
though my heart be at the root.

Never, though my mortal summers
to such length of years should come

As the many-winter'd crow
that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division
of the records of the mind?

Can I part her from herself.
and love her, as I knew her, kind? 70

I remember one that perish'd:
sweetly did she speak and move:

Such a one do I remember,
whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead,
and love her for the love she bore?

No—she never loved me truly:
love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils!
this is truth the poet sings,

That a sorrow's crown of sorrow
is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it,
lest thy heart be put to proof,

In the dead unhappy night,
and when the rain is on the roof.

Oh, the child too clothes the father
with a dearness not his due.

Half is thine and half is his :
it will be worthy of the two.

Oh, I see thee oid and formal,
fitted to thy petty part,

With a little hoard of maxims
preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings
—she herself was not exempt—

Truly, she herself had suffer'd"—
Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy!
wherefore should I care?

I myself must mix with action,
lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to,
lighting upon days like these?

Every door is barr'd with gold,
and opens but to golden keys. 100

Every gate is thronged with suitors,
all the markets overflow.

I have but an angry fancy:
what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish,
falling on the foeman's ground,

When the ranks are roll'd in vapour,
and the winds are laid with sound.
But the jingling of the guinea
helps the hurt that Honour feels,
And the nations do but murmur,
snarling at each other's heels.
Can I but relive in sadness?
I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion,
O thou wondrous Mother-Age!
Make me feel the wild pulsation
that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me,
and the tumult of my life; 110
Yearning for the large excitement
that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy
when first he leaves his father's field.
And at night along the dusky highway
near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London
flaring like a dreary dawn;
And his spirit leaps within him
to be gone before him then,

There the common sense of most
shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber,
lapt in universal law. 130

So I triumph'd, ere my passion
sweeping through me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart,
and left me with the jaundiced eye;
Eye, to which all order festers,
all things here are out of joint,
Science moves but slowly, slowly,
creeping on from point to point:
Slowly comes a hungry people,
as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks
behind a slowly-dying fire.
Yet I doubt not through the ages
one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd
with the process of the suns.
What is that to him that reaps not
harvest of his youthful joys,
Though the deep heart of existence
beat for ever like a boy's? 140

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,
and I linger on the shore,

And the individual withers.
and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,
and he bears a laden breast,

Full of sad experience, moving
toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me,
sounding on the bugle-horn,

They to whom my foolish passion
were a target for their scorn:

Shall it not be scorn to me
to harp on such a moulder'd string?

I am shamed through all my nature
to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness!
woman's pleasure, woman's pain—

Nature made them blinder motions
bounded in a shallower brain: 150

Woman is the lesser man,
and all thy passions match'd with mine,

Are as moonlight unto sunlight,
and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens,
nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient,
where my life began to beat;
Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil starr'd;
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward;
Or to burst all links of habit—
there to wander far away.
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.
Larger constellations burning,
mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster,
knots of Paradise. 160
Never comes the trader, never
floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland,
swings the trailer from the crag;
Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower,
hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying
in dark-purple spheres of sea.
There methinks would be enjoyment
more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway,
in the thoughts that shake mankind

There the passions cramp'd no longer
shall have scope and breathing-space;
I will take some savage woman,
she shall rear my dusky race.
Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd,
they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair,
and hurl their lances in the sun; 170
Whistle back the parrot's call,
and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring
over miserable books—
Fool! again the dream; the fancy!
but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian
lower than the Christian child.
I, to herd with narrow foreheads,
vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures,
like a beast with lower pains!
Mated with a squalid savage—
what to me were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages,
in the foremost files of time—
I that rather held it better
men should perish one by one,

Than that earth should stand at gaze
like Joshua's moon in Ajalon! 180

Not in vain the distance beacons.
Forward, forward let us range.

Let the great world spin for ever
down the ringing grooves of change.

Through the shadow of the globe
we creep into the younger day:

Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I know not),
help me as when life begun:

Rift the hills, and roll the waters,
flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun—

Oh, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set
Ancient founts of inspiration
well through all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be,
a long farewell to Locksley Hall!

Now for me the woods may wither,
now for me the roof-tree fall. 190

Comes a vapour from the margin,
blackening over heath and holt,

Cramming all the blast before it,
in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall,

with rain or hail, or fire or snow;

For the mighty wind arises,

roaring seaward, and I go.

IV

Less loud the sounds of silvan war
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern, where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old; 50
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,
And of the trackers of the deer,
Scarce half the lessening pack was near ;
So shrewdly on the mountain side
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V

The noble stag was pausing now
Upon the mountain's southern brow, 60
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wander'd o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
But nearer was the copsewood grey
That waved and wept on Loch Achray,
And mingled with the pine-trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Benvenue. 70
Fresh vigour with the hope return'd :
With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,

Held westward with unwearied race,
And left behind the panting chase.

VI

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambus-more ;
What reins were tighten'd in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air ;
Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,— 80
For twice that day from shore to shore
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reach'd the lake of Vennachar ;
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel ;
For jaded now, and spent with toil,
Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil, 90
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strain'd full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game ;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toil'd the bloodhounds stanch ;

Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain. 100
Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII

The Hunter mark'd that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barr'd the way ;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes ;
For the death-wound and death-halloo, 110
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew ;—
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
And turn'd him from the opposing rock ;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couch'd, the thicket shed 120
Cold dews and wild-flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

IX

Close on the hounds the hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanish'd game;
But, stumbling on the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein, 130
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
Then, touch'd with pity and remorse,
He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse.
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant grey!" 140

X

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace,
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they press'd,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note.

HOOD

LOVE'S CHAMPION

By ev'ry sweet tradition of true hearts,
Graven by time, in love with his own lore;
By all old martyrdoms and antique smarts,
Wherein Love died to be alive the more;
Yea, by the sad impression on the shore,
Left by the drowned Leander, to endear
That coast for ever, where the billow's roar
Moaneth for pity in the Poet's ear;
By Hero's faith, and the foreboding tear
That quenched her brand's last twinkle in its fall;
By Sappho's leap, and the low rustling fear
That sighed around her flight; I swear by all,
The world shall find such pattern in my act,
As if Love's great examples still were lacked./

ON RECEIVING A GIFT

Look how the golden ocean shines above
Its pebbly stones, and magnifies their girth;
So does the bright and blessed light of love
Its own things glorify, and raise their worth.
As weeds seem flowers beneath the flattering brine,
And stones like gems, and gems as gems indeed,
Even so our tokens shine; nay, they outshine

Pebbles and pearls, and gems and coral weed;
For where be ocean waves but half so clear,
So calmly constant, and so kindly warm, 10
As Love's most mild and glowing atmosphere,
That hath no dregs to be upturned by storm?
Thus, sweet, thy gracious gifts are gifts of price,
And more than gold to doting Avarice.

UNDYING LOVE

Love, dearest lady, such as I would speak,
Lives not within the humour of the eye;
Not being but an outward phantasy,
That skims the surface of a tinted cheek,—
Else it would wane with beauty, and grow weak,
As if the rose made summer,—and so lie
Amongst the perishable things that die,
Unlike the love which I would give and seek:
Whose health is of no hue—to feel decay
With cheeks' decay, that have a rosy prime. 10
Love is its own great loveliness always,
And takes new lustre from the touch of time;
Its bough owns no December and no May,
But bears its blossom into Winter's clime.

LEAR

A poor old king, with sorrow for my crown,
Throned upon straw, and mantled with the wind—
For pity, my own tears have made me blind
That I might never see my children's frown;

And, may be, Madness, like a friend, has thrown
A folded fillet over my dark mind,
So that unkindly speech may sound for kind—
Albeit I know not.—I am childish grown—
And have not gold to purchase wit withal—
I that have once maintain'd most royal state—10
A very bankrupt now that may not call
My child my child—all beggar'd save in tears,
Wherewith I daily weep an old man's fate,
Foolish—and blind—and overcome with years!

BROWNING
THE ENGLISHMAN IN ITALY

PIANO DI SORRENTO

Fortu, Fortu, my beloved one,
Sit here by my side,
On my knees put up both little feet!
I was sure, if I tried,
I could make you laugh spite of Scirocco.

Now, open your eyes,
Let me keep you amused till he vanish
In black from the skies,
With telling my memories over

As you tell your beads; 10
Till the Plain saw me gather, I garland—
The flowers or the weeds.

Time for rain! for your long hot dry Autumn
Had net-worked with brown
The white skin of each grape on the bunches,
Marked like a quail's crown,
Those creatures you make such account of,

Whose heads,—speckled white
Over brown like a great spider's back,
As I told you last night,— 20
Your mother bites off for her supper.

Red-ripe as could be,
Pomegranates were chapping and splitting

In halves on the tree :
And betwixt the loose walls of great flintstone,
Or in the thick dust
On the path, or straight out of the rock-side,
Wherever could thrust
Some burnt sprig of bold hardy rock-flower
Its yellow face up, 30
For the prize were great butterflies fighting,
Some five for one cup.
So, I guessed, ere I got up this morning,
What change was in store,
By the quick rustle-down of the quail-nets
Which woke me before
I could open my shutter, made fast
With a bough and a stone,
'And look thro' the twisted dead vine-twigs,
Sole lattice that's known. 40
Quick and sharp rang the rings down the net-poles,
While, busy beneath,
Your priest and his brother tugged at them,
The rain in their teeth.
And out upon all the flat house-roofs
Where split figs lay drying,
The girls took the frails under cover :
Nor use seemed in trying
To get out the boats and go fishing,
For, under the cliff, 50
Fierce the black water frothed o'er the blind-rock.
No seeing our skiff

Arrive about noon from Amalfi,
—Our fisher arrive,
And pitch down his basket before us,
All trembling alive
With pink and grey jellies, your sea-fruit:
You touch the strange lumps,
And mouths gape there, eyes open, all manner
Of horns and of humps, 60
Which only the fisher looks grave at,
While round him like imps
Cling screaming the children as naked
And brown as his shrimps;
Himself too as bare to the middle
—You see round his neck
The string and its brass coin suspended,
That saves him from wreck.
But to-day not a boat reached Salerno,
So back, to a man, 70
Came our friends, with whose help in the vineyards
Grape-harvest began.
In the vat, halfway up in our house-side,
Like blood the juice spins,
While your brother all bare-legged is dancing
Till breathless he grins
Dead-beaten in effort on effort
To keep the grapes under,
Since still when he seems all but master,
In pours the fresh plunder 80
From girls who keep coming and going

With basket on shoulder,
And eyes shut against the rain's driving;
Your girls that are older,—
For under the hedges of aloe,
And where, on its bed
Of the orchard's black mould, the love-apple
Lies pulpy and red,
All the young ones are kneeling and filling
Their laps with the snails 90
Tempted out by this first rainy weather,—
Your best of regales,
As to-night will be proved to my sorrow,
When, supping in state,
We shall feast our grape-gleaners (two dozen,
Three over one plate)
With lasagne so tempting to swallow
In slippery ropes,
And gourds fried in great purple slices,
That colour of popes. 100
Meantime, see the grape bunch they've brought you:
The rain-water slips
O'er the heavy blue bloom on each globe
Which the wasp to your lips
Still follows with fretful persistence:
Nay, taste, while awake,
This half of a curd-white smooth cheese-ball
That peels, flake by flake,
Like an onion, each smoother and whiter;
Next, sip this weak wine 100

From the thin green glass flask, with its stopper.

A leaf of the vine;

And end with the prickly-pear's red flesh

That leaves thro' its juice

The stony black seeds on your pearl-teeth.

Scirocco is loose!

Hark, the quick, whistling pelt of the olives

Which, thick in one's track,

Tempt the stranger to pick up and bite them.

Tho' not yet half black! 120

How the old twisted olive trunks shudder,

The medlars let fall

Their hard fruit, and the brittle great fig-trees

Snap off, figs and all,

For here comes the whole of the tempest!

No refuge, but creep

Back again to my side and my shoulder,

And listen or sleep.

O how will your country show next week,

When all the vine-boughs 130

Have been stripped of their foliage to pasture

The mules and the cows?

Last eve, I rode over the mountains;

Your brother, my guide,

Soon left me, to feast on the myrtles

That offered, each side,

Their fruit-balls, black, glossy and luscious,—

Or strip from the sorbs

A treasure, of, rosy and wondrous,
Those hairy gold orbs! 140
But my mule picked his sure sober path out,
Just stopping to neigh
When he recognized down in the valley
His mates on their way
With the faggots and barre's of water;
And soon we emerged
From the plain, where the woods could scarce
follow;
And still as we urged
Our way, the woods wondered, and left us,
As up still we trudged 150
Ah, see! The sun breaks o'er Calvano;
He strikes the great gloom
And flutters it o'er the mount's summit
In airy gold fume
All is over. Wake up and come out now,
And down let us go,
And see the fine things got in order
At church for the show
Not a pillar nor post but is dizen'd
With red and blue papers; 160
All the roof waves with ribbons, each altar
A-blaze with long tapers;
But the great masterpiece is the scaffold
Rigged glorious to hold .
All the fiddlers and fifers and drummers
And trumpeters bold,

Not afraid of Bellini nor Auber,
Who, when the priest's hoarse,
Will strike us up something that's brisk
For the feast's second course. 170
And then will the flaxen-wigged Image
Be carried in pomp
Thro' the plain, while in gallant procession
The priests mean to stomp.
All round the glad church lie old bottles
With gunpowder stopped,
Which will be, when the Image re-enters,
Religiously popped ;
And at night from the crest of Calvano
Great bonfires will hang, 180
On the plain will the trumpets join chorus,
And more poppers bang.
At all events, come—to the garden,
As far as the wall ;
See me tap with a hoe on the plaster
Till out there shall fall
A scorpion with wide angry nippers !
—"Such trifles !" you say ?
Fortú, in my England at home,
Men meet gravely to-day 190
And debate, if abolishing Corn-laws
Be righteous and wise
—If 'twere proper, Scirocco should vanish
In black from the skies !

BURNS

BONNIE LESLEY

I

O SAW ye bonnie Lesley,
As she gaed o'er the border ?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

II

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever ;
For Nature made her what she is,
And never made anither !

III

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we before thee :
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

10

IV

The Deil he could na scaith thee,
Nor aught that wad belang thee ;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee."

V

The powers aboon will tent thee ;
Misfortune sha' na steer thee :
Thou 'rt like themselves sae lovely,
That ill they 'll ne'er let near thee. 20

VI

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie !
That we may brag we hae a lass
There's nane again sae bonnie.

SONG

I

O POORTITH cauld, and restless love,
Ye wreck my peace between ye ;
Yet poortith a' I could forgive,
An't were na' for my Jeannie.
O why should fate sic pleasure have,
Life's dearest bands untwining ;
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on fortune's shining ?

II

This world's wealth when I think on,
Its pride, and a' the lave o' t— 10
Fie, fie, on silly coward man,
That he should be the slave o't !

III

Her een sae bonnie blue betray
How she repays my passion ;
But prudence is her o' erword aye,
She talks of rank and fashion.

IV

O wha can prudence think upon,
And sic a lassie by him ?
O wha can prudence think upon,
And sae in love as I am ?

20

V

How blest the humble cotter's fate !
He woos his simple dearie ;
The silly bogles, wealth and state,
Can never make them eerie.

O why should fate sic pleasure have,
Life's dearest bands untwining !
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on fortune's shining ?

HOOD

FAIR INES

I

O SAW ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

II

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivalled bright:
And blessed will the lover be,
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

10

III

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side.

And whispered thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

20

IV

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before:
And gentle youths and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream,—
If it had been no more!

30

V

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shouting of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
To her you've loved so long.

40

VI

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
That vessel never bore

So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before.—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blest one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

TENNYSON

THE VISION OF SIN

I

I HAD a vision when the night was late :
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.
He rode a horse with wings, that would have flown,
But that his heavy rider kept him down.
And from the palace came a child of sin,
And took him by the curls, and led him in,
Where sat a company with heated eyes,
Expecting when a fountain should arise :
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse, 10
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes—
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid shapes,
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine, and piles of
grapes.

II

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,
Gathering up from all the lower ground :
Narrowing in to where they sat assembled
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,
Wov'n in circles : they that heard it sigh'd,
Panted hand in hand with faces pale,
Swung themselves, and in low tones replied ; 20

Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail;
Then the music touch'd the gates and died;
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale;
Till thronging in and in, to where they waited,
As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,
The strong tempestuous treble throb'd and
palpitated;
Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparkles, and in circles, 30
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
Flung the torrent rainbow round:
Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence, changed in hue,
Caught each other with wild grimaces,
Half-invisible to the view,
Wheeling with precipitate paces
To the melody, till they flew,
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces, 40
Like to Furies, like to Graces,
Dash'd together in blinding dew:
Till kill'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-tract,

That girt the region with high cliff and lawn:
I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made himself an awful rose of dawn, 50
Unheeded: and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly drawing near,
A vapour heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
Came floating on for many a month and year,
Unheeded: and I thought I would have spoken,
And warn'd that madman ere it grew too late:
But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine was broken,
When that cold vapour touch'd the palace-gate,
And link'd again. I saw within my head
A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as Death, 60
Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said:

IV

“Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin!

Here is custom come your way:
Take my brute, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

“Bitter barmaid, waning fast!

See that sheets are on my bed:
What! the flower of life is past:
It is long before you wed. 70

Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour.
At the Dragon on the heath!

Let us have a quiet hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

"I am old, but let me drink ;
Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

"Wine is good for shrivell'd lips
When a blanket wraps the day, 80
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

"Sit thee down, and have no shame,
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :
What care I for any name ?
What for order or degree ?

"Let me screw thee up a peg :
Let me loose thy tongue with wine :
Callest thou that thing a leg ?
Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ? 90

"Thou shalt not be saved by works :
Thou hast been a sinner too :
Ruin'd trunks on' wither'd forks,
Empty scarecrows, I and you !

"Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn :

Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

“We are men of ruin’d blood ;
Therefore comes it we are wise. 100
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy-flies.

“Name and fame ! to fly sublime
Through the courts, the camps, the schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Bandied by the hands of fools.

“Friendship !—to be two in one—
Let the canting liar pack !
Well I know, when I am gone,
How she mouths behind my back. 120

“Virtue !—to be good and just—
Every heart, when sifted well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix’d with cunning sparks of hell.

“Oh ! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbour’s wife.

“Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn : 130

Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

“Drink, and let the parties rave :
They are fill’d with idle spleen ;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

“He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant’s power ;
And the tyrant’s cruel glee
Forces on the freer hour. 140

“Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

“Greet her with applausive breath,
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;
In her right a civic-wreath,
In her left a human head.

“No, I love not what is new :
She is of an ancient house ; 150
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

“Let her go ! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs ;

Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

“Drink to lofty hopes that cool—
Visions of a perfect State :
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate. 160

“Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

“Fear not thou to loose thy tongue ;
Set thy hoary fancies free ;
“What is loathsome to the young
Savours well to thee and me.

“Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand 170
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

“Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance ;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

“Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men

Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again. 180

“Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads :
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

“You are bones, and what of that ?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell’d on a skull.

“Death is king, and *Vivat Rex* !
Tread a measure on the stones, 190
Madam—if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones.

“No, I cannot praise thr fee
In your eye—nor yet your lip :
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

“Lo ! God’s likeness—the ground-plan—
Neither modell’d, glazed, nor framed :
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed ! 200

“Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath !

Drink to heavy Ignorance !

Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

“Thou art mazed, the night is long,

And the longer night is near ;

What ! I am not all as wrong

As a bitter jest is dear.

“ Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,

When the locks are crisp and curl'd ; 210

Unto me my maudlin gall

And my mockeries of the world.

“Fill the cup, and fill the can !

Mingle madness, mingle scorn !

Dregs of life, and lees of man :

Yet we will not die forlorn."

V

The voice grew faint: there came a further change:

Once more uprose the mystic mountain-range :

Below were men and horses pierced with worms, 220

And slowly quickening into lower forms :

By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of dross,

Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd with moss.

Then some one spake: " Behold ! it was a crime

Of sense avenged by sense that wore with time."

Another said: "The crime of sense became

The crime of malice, and is equal blame. ”

And one: "He had not wholly quench'd his power;
A little grain of conscience made him sour."

At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, "Is there any hope?" 230
To which an answer peal'd from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand;
And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

Drink to heavy Ignorance !
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

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WORDSWORTH

A SONNET

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells;
And students with their pensive citadels;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest peak of Furness fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
In truth the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound 10
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must
be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.]

SCOTT
THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN
XIX

It was a night of lovely June,
High rode in cloudless blue the moon,
Demayet smiled beneath her ray;
Old Stirling's towers arose in light,
And, twined in links of silver bright,
Her winding river lay.

Ah, gentle planet! other sight
Shall greet thee, next returning night.
Of broken arms and banners tore,
And marshes dark with human gore, 10
And piles of slaughtered men and horse,
And Forth that floats the frequent corse,
And many a wounded wretch to plain
Beneath thy silver light in vain!
But now, from England's host, the cry
Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
While from the Scottish legions pass
The murmured prayer, the early mass!—
Here, numbers had presumption given; 19
There, bands o'ermatched sought aid from Heaven.

XX

On Gillie's-hill, whose height commands
The battle-field, fair Edith stands,

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And midmost of the phalanx broad 50

The Monarch held his sway.

Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
Around him waves a sea of plumes,
Where many a knight in battle known,
And some who spurs had first braced on,
And deemed that fight should see them won,
King Edward's hests obey.

De Argentine attends his side,
With stout De Valence, Pembroke's pride,
Selected champions from the train, 60
To wait upon his bridle-rein.

Upon the Scottish foe he gazed—
—At once, before his sight amazed,
Sunk banner, spear, and shield;

Each weapon-point is downward sent,
Each warrior to the ground is bent.

"The rebels, Argentine, repent!

For pardon they have kneeled."—

"Aye!—but they bend to other powers,
And other pardon sue than ours! 70

See where you bare-foot Abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands!

Upon the spot where they have kneeled
These men will die, or win the field."—

—"Then prove we if they die or win!
Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin."—

With serf and page unfit for war,
To eye the conflict from afar.
O! with what doubtful agony
She sees the dawning tint the sky!—
Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
And glistens now Demayet dun;

Is it the lark that carols shrill? 30

Is it the bittern's early hum?

No!—distant, but increasing still,

The trumpet's sound swells up the hill

With the deep murmur of the drum.

Responsive from the Scottish host,

Pipe-clang and bugle-sound were tossed,

His breast and brow each soldier crossed,

And started from the ground;

Armed and arrayed for instant fight,

Rose archer, spearman, squire, and knight,

And in the pomp of battle bright 40

The dread battalia frowned.

XXI

Now onward, and in open view,

The countless ranks of England drew,

Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,

When the rough west hath chafed his pride,

And his deep roar sends challenge wide

To all that bars his way!

In front the gallant archers trode,

The men-at-arms behind them rode,

He cried; and, vaulting from the ground,
His saddle every horseman found.

On high their glittering crests they toss,
As springs the wild-fire from the moss;
The shield hangs down on every breast,
Each ready lance is in the rest,

110

And loud shouts Edward Bruce—
“Forth, Marshal, on the peasant foe!
We’ll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bowstring loose!”—

XXIII

Then spurs were dashed in charger’s flanks,
They rushed among the archer ranks.

No spears were there the shock to let,
No stakes to turn the charge were set,
And how shall yeoman’s armour slight
Stand the long lance and mace of might?

120

Or what may their short swords avail,
’Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail?

Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
High o’er their heads the weapons swung,
And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
Give note of triumph and of rout!

Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
Their English hearts the strife made good;
Borne down at length on every side,
Compelled to flight, they scatter wide.—

130

Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee.

XXII

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
Just as the Northern ranks arose,
Signal for England's archery
To halt and bend their bows. 80
Then stepped each yeoman forth a pace,
Glanced at the intervening space,
And raised his left hand high;
To the right ear the cords they bring—
—At once ten thousand bowstrings ring,
Ten thousand arrows fly!
Nor paused on the devoted Scot
The ceaseless fury of their shot;
As fiercely and as fast
Forth whistling came the gray-goose wing, 90
As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
Adown December's blast.
Nor mountain targe of tough bull-hide,
Nor Lowland mail, that storm may bide;
Woe, woe to Scotland's banner'd pride,
If the fell shower may last!
Upon the right, behind the wood,
Each by his steed dismounted, stood
The Scottish chivalry;—
With foot in stirrup, hand on mane, 100
Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
His own keen heart, his eager train,
Until the archers gained the plain;
Then, "Mount, ye gallants free!"

That panted for the shock!

160

With blazing crests and banners spread,
And trumpet-clang and clamour dread,
The wide plain thundered to their tread,
As far as Stirling rock.

Down! down! in headlong overthrow,
Horseman and horse, the foremost go,
Wild floundering on the field!

The first are in destruction's gorge,
Their followers wildly o'er them urge;—

The knightly helm and shield,

170

The mail, the acton, and the spear,
Strong hand, high heart, are useless here!
Loud from the mass confused the cry
Of dying warriors swells on high,
And steeds that shriek in agony!
They came like mountain-torrent red,
That thunders o'er its rocky bed;
They broke like that same torrent's wave,
When swallowed by a darksome cave.

Billows on billows burst and boil,

180

Maintaining still the stern turmoil,
And to their wild and tortured groan
Each adds new terrors of his own!

XXV

Too strong in courage and in might
Was England yet, to yield the fight.
Her noblest all are here;

And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee!
The broken bows of Bannock's shore
Shall in the green-wood ring no more!
Round Wakefield's merry may-pole now
The maids may twine the summer bough,
May northward look with longing glance,
For those that wont to lead the dance,
For the blithe archers, look in vain!
Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en, 140
Pierced through, trode down, by thousands slain,
They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

XXIV

The King with scorn beheld their flight.
"Are these," he said, "our yeomen wight?
Each braggart churl could boast before,
Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore!
Fitter to plunder chase or park
Than make a manly foe their mark.—
Forward, each gentleman and knight!
Let gentle blood show generous might. 150
And chivalry redeem the fight!"—
To rightward of the wild affray,
The field showed fair and level way:
But, in mid-space, the Bruce's care
Had bored the ground with many a pit,
With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
That formed a ghastly snare.
Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
With spears in rest, and hearts on flame,

XXVI

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
Unceasing blow by blow was met;

The groans of those who fell
Were drowned amid the shriller clang,
That from the blades and harness rang, 220
And in the battle-yell.

Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
Both Southron fierce and hardy Scot;—
And O! amid that waste of life,
What various motives fired the strife!
The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
The Patriot for his country's claim;
This Knight his youthful strength to prove.
And that to win his lady's love;

Some fought from ruffian thirst of blood, 230
From habit some, or hardihood.
But ruffian stern, and soldier good.

The noble and the slave,
From various cause the same wild road,
On the same bloody morning, trode
To that dark inn. the Grave!

XXVII

The tug of strife to flag begins,
Though neither loses yet nor wins.
High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust.
And feebler speeds the blow and thrust. 240
Douglas leans on his war-sword now,

Names that to fear were never known,
Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brotherton,
And Oxford's famed De Vere.
There Gloster plied the bloody sword, 190
And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
Bottetourt and Sanzavere,
Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's fame—
Names known too well in Scotland's war,
At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar;
Blazed broader yet in after years,
At Cressy red and fell Poitiers.
Pembroke with these, and Argentine, 200
Brought up the rearward battle-line.
With caution o'er the ground they tread,
Slippery with blood and piled with dead,
Till hand to hand in battle set,
The bills with spears and axes met,
And, closing dark on every side,
Raged the full contest far and wide.
Then was the strength of Douglas tried,
Then proved was Randolph's generous pride,
And well did Stuart's actions grace
The sire of Scotland's royal race! 210
Firmly they kept their ground;
As firmly England onward pressed,
And down went many a noble crest,
And rent was many a valiant breast,
And Slaughter revelled round.

The foe is fainting fast!
Each strike for parent, child, and wife, 270
For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
The battle cannot last!”

XXIX

The fresh and desperate onset bore
The foes three furlongs back and more,
Leaving their noblest in their gore.

Alone, De Argentine
Yet, bears on high his red-cross shield,
Gathers the relics of the field,
Renews the ranks where they have reeled,
And still makes good the line. 280
Brief strife, but fierce, his efforts raise,
A bright but momentary blaze.

Fair Edith heard the Southron shout,
Beheld them turning from the rout,
Heard the wild call their trumpets sent,
In notes 'twixt triumph and lament.

That rallying force, combined anew,
Appeared, in her distracted view,

To hem the isles-men round;
“ O God! the combat they renew, 290
And is no rescue found!

And ye that look thus tamely on,
And see your native land o'erthrown,
O! are your hearts of flesh or stone?”—

And Randolph wipes his bloody brow;
Nor less had toiled each Southern knight,
From morn till mid-day in the fight.
Strong Egremont for air must gasp.
Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
And Montague must quit his spear,
And sinks thy falchion, bold De Vere!
The blows of Berkley fall less fast,
And gallant Pembroke's bugle-blast
Hath lost its lively tone;
Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,
And Percy's shout was fainter heard,
"My merry-men, fight on!".....

250

XXVIII

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could spy.
"One effort more and Scotland's free!
Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa-rock;
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge;
Now, forward to the shock!"—
At once the spears were forward thrown,
Against the sun the broadswords shone;
The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
And loud King Robert's voice was known—
"Carrick, press on—they fail, they fail!
Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,

260

The rearward squadrons fled amain.

Or made but doubtful stay;—

But when they mark the seeming show
Of fresh and fierce and marshalled foe,

The boldest broke array.

O give their hapless prince his due!

In vain the royal Edward threw

His person 'mid the spears,

Cried "Fight!" to terror and despair.

330

Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair.

And cursed their caitiff fears:

Till Pembroke turned his bridle rein,

And forced him from the fatal plain.

With them rode Argentine, until

They gained the summit of the hill,

But quitted there the train:—

"In yonder field a gage I left,—

I must not live of fame bereft:

I needs must turn again.

340

Speed hence, my Liege, for on your trace

The fiery Douglas takes the chase,—

I know his banner well.

God send my Sovereign joy and bliss.

And many a happier field than this!—

Once more, my Liege, farewell."

XXXIII

Again he faced the battle-field.—

Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield.

"Now then," he said, and couched his spear.

XXX

The multitude that watched afar,
 Rejected from the ranks of war,
 Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
 When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;
 Each heart had caught the patriot spark,
 Old man and stripling, priest and clerk, 300
 Bondsman and serf; even female hand
 Stretched to the hatchet or the brand;
 But, when mute Amadine they heard
 Give to their zeal his signal-word,
 A frenzy fired the throng;—
 "Portents and miracles impeach
 Our sloth—the dumb our duties teach—
 And He that gives the mute his speech
 Can bid the weak be strong.

To us, as to our lords, are given 310
 A native earth, a promised heaven;
 To us, as to our lords, belongs
 The vengeance for our nation's wrongs;
 The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warms
 Our breasts as theirs—"To arms, to arms!"—
 To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
 And mimic ensigns high they rear.
 And, like a bannered host afar,
 Bear down on England's wearied war.

XXXI

Already scattered o'er the plain, 320
 Reproof, command, and counsel vain,

And gave command for horse and spear
To press the Southron's scattered rear,
Nor let his broken force combine, 380
—When the war-cry of Argentine
Fell faintly on his ear!

“Save, save his life,” he cried, “O save
The kind, the noble, and the brave!”—
The squadrons round free passage gave,
The wounded knight drew near.
He raised his red-cross shield no more,
Helm, cuish, and breastplate streamed with gore;
Yet as he saw the King advance,
He strove even then to couch his lance— 390

The effort was in vain!
The spur-stroke failed to rouse the horse;
Wounded and weary, in mid course
He stumbled on the plain.

Then foremost was the generous Bruce
To raise his head, his helm to loose:—

“Lord Earl, the day is thine!
My Sovereign's charge, and adverse fate
Have made our meeting all too late:

Yet this may Argentine, 400
As boon from ancient comrade, crave—
A Christian's mass, a soldier's grave.”—

XXXIV

Bruce pressed his dying hand—its grasp
Kindly replied; but, in his clasp,

My course is run, the goal is near; 350
One effort, more one brave career,
Must close this race of mine."
Then in his stirrups rising high,
He shouted loud his battle-cry,
"Saint James for Argentine!"
And, of the bold pursuers, four
The gallant knight from saddle bore;
But not unharmed—a lance's point
Has found his breast-plate's loosened joint,
An axe has razed his crest; 360
Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
Who pressed the chase with gory sword,
He rode with spear in rest,
And through his bloody tartans bored,
And through his gallant breast.
Nailed to the earth, the mountaineer
Yet writhed him up against the spear,
And swung his broad-sword round!
—Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave way,
Beneath that blow's tremendous sway, 370
The blood gushed from the wound;
And the grim Lord of Colonsay
Hath turned him on the ground,
And laughed in death-pang, that his blade
The mortal thrust so well repaid.

XXXIII

Now toiled the Bruce, the battle done,
To use his conquest boldly won;

Rights dear to all who freedom love,
To none so dear as thee!

XXXVI

Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear:
With him, a hundred voices tell
Of prodigy and miracle,

“For the mute Page had spoke!”

“Page!” said Fitz-Louis, “rather say, 440
An angel sent from realms of day,
To burst the English yoke.

I saw his plume and bonnet drop,
When hurrying from the mountain top;
A lovely brow, dark locks that wave
To his bright eyes new lustre gave,
A step as light upon the green
As if his pinions waved unseen!”—

’Mid victor monarch’s musings high,
Mirth laughed in good King Robert’s eye. 450

“And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair?
Hath Ronald kneeled to him?” he said,
“Then must we call the church to aid—
Our will be to the Abbot known,
Ere these strange news are wider blown.
To Cambuskenneth straight he pass,
And deck the church for solemn mass,
To pay, for high deliverance given,

It stiffened and grew cold—
And, “O farewell!” the victor cried,
“Of chivalry the flower and pride.

The arm in battle bold,
The courteous mien, the noble race,
The stainless faith, the manly face!— 410
Bid Ninian’s convent light their shrine,
For late-wake of De Argentine.
O’er better knight on death-bier laid
Torch never gleamed nor mass was said!”—

XXXV

Nor for De Argentine alone
Through Ninian’s church these torches shone,
And rose the death-prayer’s awful tone.
That yellow lustre glimmered pale
On broken plate and bloodied mail,
Rent crest and shattered coronet, 420
Of Baron, Earl, and Banneret;
And the best names that England knew
Claimed in the death-prayer dismal due.

Yet mourn not, Land of Fame!
Though ne’er the leopards on thy shield
Retreated from so sad a field

Since Norman William came.
Oft may thine annals justly boast
Of battles stern by Scotland lost;

Grudge not her victory, 430
When for her free-born rights she strove:

TENNYSON

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge.
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms.
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes, 10
Or hath come since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur. "Place me in the barge."
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud.
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white 20
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon

A nation's thanks to gracious Heaven.

460

Let him array, besides, such state

As should on princes' nuptials wait.

Oursel' the cause, through fortune's spite,

That once broke short that spousal rite,

Oursel' will grace, with early morn,

The bridal of the Maid of Lorn."

Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done
 May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by
 prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy
 voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 [For what are are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them
 friend?

60

For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
 But now farewell. I am going a long way
 With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)—
 To the island-valley of Avilion;
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
 And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."
 So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted
 swan
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,

70

Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest, 30
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the boid Sir Bedivere;
"Ah my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led 40
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world. 50

MACDONALD

THE SANGREAL

[A PART OF THE STORY OMITTED IN THE OLD
ROMANCES.]

I

How Sir Galahad despaired of finding the Grail.

THROUGH the wood the sunny day
Glimmered sweetly glad;
Through the wood his weary way
Rode Sir Galahad.

All about stood open porch,
Long-drawn cloister dim;
'Twas a wavering wandering church,
Every side of him.

On through columns arching high—
Foliage-vaulted, he
Rode in thirst that made him sigh.
Like a misery.

10

Came the moon, through ghostly trees
Glimmering faintly glad;
Withered, worn, and ill at ease,
Down lay Galahad:

Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

MACDONALD

THE SANGREAL

[A PART OF THE STORY OMITTED IN THE OLD
ROMANCES.]

I

How Sir Galahad despaired of finding the Grail.

THROUGH the wood the sunny day
Glimmered sweetly glad;
Through the wood his weary way
Rode Sir Galahad.

All about stood open porch,
Long-drawn cloister dim;
'Twas a wavering wandering church,
Every side of him.

On through columns arching high—
Foliage-vaulted, he
Rode in thirst that made him sigh,
Like a misery.

10

Came the moon, through ghostly trees
Glimmering faintly glad;
Withered, worn, and ill at ease,
Down lay Galahad:

Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

St

Through the world so dreary wide
Mateless he must go!

Lost was life and all its good—
Gone without avail!
All his labour never would
Find the Holy Grail.

II

How Sir Galahad found and lost the Grail.

Galahad was in the night,
And the wood was drear;
But to men in darksome plight
Radiant things appear.

Wings he heard not floating by,
Heard no heavenly hail;
But he started with a cry—
Saw the Holy Grail.

Hid from bright, beholding sun,
Hid from moonlight wan—
Lo, from age-long darkness won,
And restored to man!

60

Three feet off, on cushioned moss,
As if cast away,
Homely wood with carven cross,
Rough and rude it lay.

Closed his eyes, and took no heed

What might come to pass;

Heard his hunger-busy steed

Cropping dewy grass.

20

Cool and juicy was the blade,

Good to him as wine;

For his labour he was paid—

Galahad must pine.

Late had he, at Arthur's board,

Arthur strong and wise,

Pledged the cup with friendly lord

Looked in ladies' eyes.

Now, alas! he wandered wide,

Resting never more,

30

Over lake and mountain-side,

Over sea and shore!

Swift in vision rose and fled

All he might have had;

Weary tossed his restless head,

And his heart grew sad.

With the lowliest in the land,

He a maiden fair

Might have led with virgin hand

From the altar-stair.

40

Youth away with strength would glide,

Age bring frost and woe;

III

How Sir Galahad gave up the quest for the Grail.

Ere the sun had cast his light
On the water's face, 90
Firm in saddle rode the knight
From the holy place;

Merry songs began to sing,
Let his matins bide;
Rode a good hour pondering,
And was turned aside—

Saying, "I will wisely then
Cease a hopeless quest
After dream of ancient men—
Visionary Best! 100

"Common good than miracle
Yields a better hold;
Grail indeed was that fair well
Full of water cold.

"Not my thirst alone it stilled,
But my soul it stayed;
And my heart, with gladness filled,
Wept and laughed and prayed.

"Hidden church I seek in vale,
Wood, or lake, no more:

Too much trembling to rise up,
Reverent gazed the knight;
Fearing, daring, towards the cup
Stole his hand of might.

But, as if it fled from harm,
Sank the holy thing;
Eager following hand and arm
Plunged into a spring.

70

Oh the thirst! the water sweet!—
Down he lay and quaffed;
Quaffed and rose up to his feet;
Rose and gayly laughed;

Fell upon his knees to thank,
Loved and lauded there;
Stretched him on the mossy bank,
Fell asleep in prayer;

80

Dreamed, and dreaming murmured low
Ave, pater, creed;
When the fir-tops 'gan to glow,
Waked and called his steed;

Drew the girth, and loosed his sword,
Braced his slackened mail;
Doubting said: "I dreamed the Lord
Offered me the Grail."

V

That Sir Galahad found the Grail.

Up the quest again he took,
Rode through wood and wave, 130
Sought in every mossy nook,
Every hermit cave;

Sought until the evening red
Sunk in shadow deep;
Sought until the moonlight fled;
Slept, and sought in sleep.

Where he wandered, seeking, sad,
Story does not say;
But at length Sir Galahad
Found it on a day; 140

Took the cup into his hand,
Held the Grail of joy;
Carried it about the land,
Gleesome as a boy;

Laid his sword where he had found
Boot for every bale;
Stuck his spear into the ground;
Kept alone the Grail.

I shall find a Holy Grail
Where the need is sore."

IV

How Sir Galahad sought yet again for the Grail.

On he rode, to succour bound,
But his faith grew dim: 110
Wells for thirst he many found,
Water none for him.

Never more from drinking deep
Up he rose and laughed;
Never more a prayerful sleep
Followed on the draught.

Common water, all they bore,
Plentifully flowed;
Quenched his thirst, but ah! no more
Eased his bosom's load. 120

For the *Best* no more he sighed—
Saw the good askance;
Life grew poor and vague and wide,
And his lot a chance.

Then he dreamed through Jesus' hand
That he drove a nail;
Woke and cried, "Through every land,
Lord, I seek thy Grail."

Found each cave a palace-bed,
Every rock a tent.

Age that had begun to quail
In the gathering gloom,
Counselled he to seek the Grail,
And forget the tomb.

Bright with hope, or passion-pale,
Youths with eager eyes,
Taught he that the Holy Grail
Was the only prize.

180

Maiden, worn with hidden ail,
Restless and unsure,
Taught he that the Holy Grail
Was the only cure.

Children, rosy in the sun,
Ran to hear his tale—
How twelve little ones had won
Each of them the Grail.

VII

How Sir Galahad hid the Grail.

Very still was earth and sky,
When in death he lay;
Oft he said he should not die—
Would but go away.

190

VI

How Sir Galahad carried about the Grail.

Horse and crested helmet gone,
Mace and shield and mail, 150
He loud caroling walked on,
For he had the Grail—

Caroling walked south and north,
East and west, for years;
Where he went, the smiles came forth,
Where he left, the tears.

Glave nor charger needed he,
Spur nor iron flail;
Evil might not brook to see
Once the Holy Grail. 160

Wilds he wandered with his staff,
Woods no longer sad;
Earth and sky and sea did laugh
Round Sir Galahad.

Bitter mere nor trodden pool
Did in service fail,
Flowing sweet and clear and cool
From the Holy Grail.

Without where to lay his head,
Chanting loud he went; 170

TENNYSON

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel :
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands, 10
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall !
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall :
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine. 20
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill
So keep I fair through faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When he passed, they reverent sought,
Where his hand lay prest,
For the cup he bare, they thought,
Hidden in his breast.

Hope and haste and eager thrill

Were of none avail:

Hid he held it—deeper still—

Took with him the Grail.

The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, spins from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.

I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

60

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

70

The clouds are broken in the sky.
And through the mountain walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes, and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on ! the prize is near."

80

When down the stormy crescent goes,

A light before me swims,

Between dark stems the forest glows,

I hear a noise of hymns :

Then by some secret shrine I ride ;

I hear a voice, but none are there;

30

The stalls are void, the doors are wide,

The tapers burning fair.

Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,

The silver vessels sparkle clean,

The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,

And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres

I find a magic bark ;

I leap on board : no helmsman steers :

I float till all is dark.

40

A gentle sound, an awful light !

Three angels bear the holy Grail :

With folded feet, in stoles of white,

On sleeping wings they sail.

Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !

My spirit beats her mortal bars,

As down dark tides the glory slides,

And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne

Through dreaming towns I go,

50

The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,

The streets are dumb with snow.

WORDSWORTH

LINES WRITTEN NEAR TINTERN ABBEY

FIVE years have past; five summers, with the
length

Of five long winters! and again I hear

These waters, rolling from their mountain-
springs

With a soft inland murmur.—Once again

Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,

That on a wild secluded scene impress

Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect

The landscape with the quiet of the sky.

The day is come when I again repose

Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10

These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,

Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,

Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see

The hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines

Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,

Green to the very door: and wreaths of smoke

Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!

With some uncertain notice, as might seem,

Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, 20

Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire

The Hermit sits alone.

So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft— 50
 In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
 O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
 How often has my spirit turned to thee!
 And now, with gleams of half-extinguished
 thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60
 The picture of the mind revives again:
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
 That in this moment there is life and food
 For future years. And so I dare to hope,
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when
 first

I came among these hills; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 Wherever nature led; more like a man 70
 Flying from something that he dreads, than one
 Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too 30
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world 40
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this

What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite, a feeling and a love, 80
That had no need of a remoter charm
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes 90
The still sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels 100
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.
Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,

And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty world
 Of eye and ear,—both what they half create,
 And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
 In nature and the language of the sense
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul 110
 Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
 For thou art with me here upon the banks
 Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
 My dear, dear Friend ; and in thy voice I catch
 The language of my former heart, and read
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
 May I behold in thee what I was once, 120
 My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
 Knowing that Nature never did betray
 The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 From joy to joy: for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all 130
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,

A SONNET

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship must go?
Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,
Festively she puts forth in trim array;
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow?
What boots the inquiry?—Neither friend nor foe
She cares for; let her travel where she may,
She finds familiar names, a beaten way
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark?
And, almost as it was when ships were rare, 10
(From time to time, like Pilgrims, here and there
Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,
Of the old Sea some reverential fear,
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark.

Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, 140
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh ! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance—
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these
gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream 150
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh ! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !

A SONNET

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship must go?
Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,
Festively she puts forth in trim array;
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow?
What boots the inquiry?—Neither friend nor foe
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Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,
Of the old Sea some reverential fear,
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark.

PATMORE

THE FALCON

Who would not be Sir Hubert, for his birth and
bearing fine,
His rich sky-skirted woodlands, valleys flowing
oil and wine ;
Sir Hubert, to whose sunning all the rays of
fortune shine ?

So most men praised Sir Hubert, and some
others warm'd with praise
Of Hubert noble-hearted, than whom none went
on his ways
Less spoilt by splendid fortune, whom no peril
could amaze.

To Ladies all, save one, he was the rule by which
the worth
Of other men was reckon'd ; so that many a maid,
for dearth
Of such a knight to woo her, love forswore, and
with it mirth.

No prince could match his banquets, when proud
Mabel was his guest ; 10
And shows and sumptuous triumphs day by day
his hope express'd

That love e'en yet might burgeon in her young
unburgeon'd breast.

Time pass'd, and use for riches pass'd with hope,
which slowly fled;
And want came on unheeded; and report in one
day spread
Of good Sir Hubert houseless, and of Mabel
richly wed.

Forth went he from the city where she dwelt, to
one poor farm,
All left of all his valleys; there Sir Hubert's
single arm
Served Hubert's wants; and labour soon relieved
love's rankling harm.

Much hardship brought much easement of the
melancholy freight
He bore within his bosom; and his fancy was elate
And proud of love's rash sacrifice which led to
this estate. 21

One friend was left, a falcon, famed for beauty,
skill, and size,
Kept from his fortune's ruin, for the sake of its
great eyes,
That seem'd to him like Mabel's. Of an evening
he would rise,

And wake its royal glances and reluctantly
flapp'd wings,
And looks of grave communion with his light-
some questionings,
That broke the drowsy sameness, and the sense
from fear that springs

At night, when we are conscious of our distance
from the strife
Of cities, and the memory of the spirit in all
things rife
Endows the silence round us with a grim and
ghastly life. 30

His active resignation wrought, in time, a heart-
felt peace,
And though, in noble bosoms, love once lit can
never cease,
He could walk and think of Mabel, and his pace
would not increase.

Who say, when somewhat distanced from the
heat and fiercer might,
'Love's brand burns us no longer; it is out,' use
not their sight:
For ever and for ever we are lighted by the light:
And ere there be extinguish'd one minutest flame,
love-fann'd,

The Pyramids of Egypt shall have no place in
the land,
But as a nameless portion of its ever-shifting sand.
News came at last that Mabel was a widow; but
with this, 40
That all her dead Lord's wealth went first to her
one child and his:
So she was not for Hubert, had she beckon'd
him to bliss;
For Hubert felt, tho' Mabel might, like him,
become resign'd
To poverty for Love's sake, she might never,
like him, find
That poverty is plenty, peace, and freedom of the
mind.
One morning, while he rested from his delving,
spade in hand,
He thought of her and blest her, and he look'd
about the land,
And he, and all he look'd at, seem'd to brighten
and expand.
The wind was newly risen; and the airy skies
were rife
With fleets of sailing cloudlets, and the trees
were all in strife, 50
Extravagantly triumphant at their newly gotten
life.

Birds wrangled in the branches, with a trouble of
sweet noise;
Even the conscious cuckoo, judging wisest to rejoice,
Shook round his 'cuckoo, cuckoo,' as if careless
of his voice.

But Hubert mused and marvell'd at the glory in
his breast;
The first glow turn'd to passion, and he nursed
it unexpress'd;
And glory gilding glory turn'd at last, to sunny rest.
Then again he look'd around him, like an angel,
and, behold,
The scene was changed, no cloudlets cross'd the
serious blue, but, roll'd
Behind the distant hill-tops, gleamed aerial hills
of gold. 60

The wind too was abated, and the trees and birds
were grown
As quiet as the cloud-banks; right above, the
bright sun shone,
Down looking from the forehead of the giant sky
alone.

Then the nightingale, awaken'd by the silence,
shot a throng
Of notes into the sunshine; cautious first, then
swift and strong;

Then he madly smote them round him, till the
bright air throb'd with song,
And suddenly stopp'd singing, all amid his
ecstasies:—
Myrtles rustle; what sees Hubert? sight is
sceptic, but his knees
Bend to the Lady Mabel, as she blossoms from
the trees.

She spoke, her eyes cast downwards, while upon
them, dropp'd half way, 70
Lids fairer than the bosom of an unblown lily lay:
'In faith of ancient amity, Sir Hubert, I this day
'Would beg a boon, and bind me your great
debtor.' O, her mouth
Was sweet beyond new honey, or the bean-per-
fumed South,
And better than pomegranates to a pilgrim dumb
for drouth!

She look'd at his poor homestead; at the spade
beside his hand;
And then her heart reproach'd her, What inordi-
nate demand
Was she come there for making! Then she says,
in accents bland,

Her Page and she are weary, and her wish can
wait; she'll share

'My wilful child, Sir Hubert, pines from fancy
long deferr'd;
And now he raves in fever to possess your
famous bird.'

'Alas!' he said, 'behold it there.' Then nobly
did she say:

'It grieves my heart, Sir Hubert, that I'm much
too poor to pay
For this o'er-queenly banquet I am honour'd
with today;

'But if, Sir, we two, henceforth, can converse as
friends, my board 100
To you shall be as open as it would, were you its
Lord.'

And so she bow'd, and left him, from his vex'd
mind unrestored.

Months pass'd, and Hubert went not, but lived
on in his old way;

Until to him, one morning, Mabel sent her Page
to say,

That, should it suit his pleasure, she would speak
with him that day.

'Ah, welcome, Sir!' said Mabel, rising courteous,
kind and free:

'I hoped, ere this, to have had you for my
guest, but now I see

That you are even prouder than they whisper
you to be.'

Feasting the hungry silence came, sob-clad, her
silver 'Yes.'

Now who would not be Hubert, for his dark-eyed
Bride divine,

His rich, sky-skirted woodlands, valleys flowing
oil and wine, 140

Sir Hubert to whose sunning all the rays of
fortune shine!

THE YEAR.

The crocus, while the days are dark,

Unfolds its saffron sheen;

At April's touch, the crudest bark

Discovers gems of green.

Then sleep the seasons, full of might;

While slowly swells the pod

And rounds the peach, and in the night

The mushroom bursts the sod.

The winter falls; the frozen rut

Is bound with silver bars;

10

The snow-drift heaps against the hut,

And night is pierc'd with stars.

WHITMAN .

CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY

I

FLOOD-TIDE below me! I see you face to face!
Clouds of the west—sun there half an hour high—I see
you also face to face.
Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes,
how curious you are to me!
On the ferry-boats the hundreds and hundreds that
cross, returning home, are more curious to me
than you suppose,
And you that shall cross from shore to shore years
hence are more to me, and more in my meditations,
than you might suppose.

II

The impalpable sustenance of me from all things at all
hours of the day,
The simple, compact, well-join'd scheme, myself disintegrated,
every one disintegrated yet part of the scheme,
The similitudes of the past and those of the future,
The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights
and hearings, on the walk in the street and the
passage over the river,
The current rushing so swiftly and swimming with me
far away, 10

The others that are to follow me, the ties between me
and them,
The certainty of others, the life, love, sight, hearing
of others.
Others will enter the gates of the ferry and cross from
shore to shore,
Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and
west, and the heights of Brooklyn to the south and east.
Others will see the islands large and small;
Fifty years hence. others will see them as they cross,
the sun half an hour high,
A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years
hence, others will see them,
Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring-in of the flood-tide,
the falling-back to the sea of the ebb-tide.

III

It avails not, time nor place—distance avails not, 20
I am with you, you men and women of a generation,
or ever so many generations hence;
I project myself—also I return—I am with you, and
know how it is.
Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky,
so I felt,
Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one
of a crowd,

Just as you are refresh'd by the gladness of the river
and the bright flow, I was refresh'd,
Just as you stand, and lean on the rail, yet hurry with
the swift current, I stood yet was hurried,
Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships and
the thick-stemm'd pipes of steamboats, I look'd.
I too many and many a time cross'd the river of old,
Watched the Twelfth-month sea-gulls, saw them high
in the air floating with motionless wings, oscillat-
ing their bodies,
Saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their
bodies and left the rest in strong shadow, 30
Saw the slow-wheeling circles and the gradual edging
toward the south,
Saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water,
Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of
beams,
Look'd at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round
the shape of my head in the sunlit water,
Look'd on the haze on the hills southward and south-
westward,
Look'd on the vapour as it flew in fleeces tinged with
violet,
Look'd toward the lower bay to notice the vessels
arriving,
Saw their approach; saw aboard those that were near
me,
Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the
ships at anchor,

The sailors at work in the rigging or out astride the
spars, 40
The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls, the
slender serpentine pennants,
The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in
their pilot-houses,
The white wake left by the passage, the quick tremulous
whirl of the wheels,
The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sunset,
The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled
cups, the frolicsome crests and glistening,
The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the grey
walls of the granite storehouses by the docks,
On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug
closely flank'd on each side by the barges, the
hayboat, the belated lighter,
On the neighbouring shore the fires from the foundry
chimneys burning high and glaringly into the night,
Casting their flicker of black contrasted with wild red
and yellow light over the tops of houses, and down
into the clefts of streets.

IV

These and all else were to me the same as they are to
you ; 50
I project myself a moment to tell you—also I return.
I loved well those cities, loved well the stately and
rapid river,
The men and women I saw were all near to me.
Others the same—others who look back on me because
I look'd forward to them

(The time will come, though I stop here to-day and
to-night).

V

What is it then between us ?

What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years
between us ?

Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and
place avails not.

I too lived—Brooklyn of ample hills was mine;

I too walk'd the streets of Manhattan Island, and
bathed in the waters around it ; 60

I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me,
In the day among crowds of people sometimes they
came upon me.

In my walks home late at night or as I lay in my bed
they came upon me.

I too had been struck from the float for ever held in
solution;

I too had receiv'd identity by my body ;

That I was I knew was of my body, and what I should
be I knew I should be of my body.

VI

It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
The dark threw its patches down upon me also ;

The best I had done seem'd to me blank and suspicious,
My great thoughts as I supposed them, were they not
in reality meagre ?

I consider'd long and seriously of you before you were
born. 90

Who was to know what should come home to me ?

Who knows but I am enjoying this ?

Who knows but I am as good as looking at you now, for
all you cannot see me ?

It is not you alone, nor I alone ;

Not a few races, nor a few generations, nor a few
centuries ;

It is that each came, or comes, or shall come, from its
due emission,

From the general centre of all, and forming a part of
all ;

Everything indicates—the smallest does, and the largest
does ;

A necessary film envelopes all, and envelopes the Soul
for a proper time.

VIII

Ah, what can ever be more stately and admirable to me
than mast-hem'd Manhattan ? 100

River and sunset and scallop-edg'd waves of flood-tide ;
The sea gulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in
the twilight, and the belated lighter ?

What gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand,
and with voices I love call me promptly and
loudly by my highest name as I approach ?

What is more subtle than this which ties me to the
woman or man that looks in my face,

Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning
into you ?

We understand then, do we not ?

What I promis'd without mentioning it, have you not
accepted ?

What the study could not teach—what the preaching
could not accomplish is accomplish'd, is it not ?

What the push of reading could not start, is started by
me personally, is it not ?

XI

Flow on, river ! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with
the ebb-tide !

Frolic on, crested and scallop-edg'd waves !

Gorgeous clouds of the sunset ! drench with your
splendour me, or the men and women generations
after me !

Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of
passengers !

Stand up, tall masts of Manhattan ! stand up, beautiful
hills of Brooklyn !

Throb, baffled and curious brain ! throw out questions
and answers !

Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution !
Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house or street
or public assembly !

Sound out, voices of young men ! loudly and musically
call me by my highest name !

Live, old life! play the part that looks back on the actor
or actress!

Play the old role, the role that is great or small
according as one makes it! 120

Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in
unknown ways be looking upon you;

Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean
idly, yet haste with the hasting current;

Fly on, sea-birds! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles
high in the air;

Receive the summer sky, you water, and faithfully hold
it till all downcast eyes have time to take it from you!

Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my
head, or any one's head, in the sunlit water!

Come on, ships from the lower bay! pass up or down,
white-sail'd schooners, sloops, lighters!

Flaunt away, flags of all nations! be duly lower'd at
sunset!

Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys! cast black
shadows at nightfall! cast red and yellow light
over the tops of the houses!

Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are;
You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul; 130
About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung
our divinest aromas;

Thrive, cities—bring your freight, bring your shows,
ample and sufficient rivers;

Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more
spiritual ;

Keep your places, objects than which none else is more
lasting.

You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful
ministers !

We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate
hence-forward ;

Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold
yourselves from us,

We use you, and do not cast you aside—we plant you
permanently within us,

We fathom you not—we love you—there is perfection
in you also,

You furnish your parts toward eternity, 140

Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul.

CLOUGH

SAY not the struggle naught availleth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars:
It may be, in yon smoke conceal'd.
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking, 10
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
But westward, look, the land is bright!

GORDON

GONE

In Collins Street standeth a statue tall.

A statue tall, on a pillar of stone,
Telling its story to great and small

Of the dust reclaimed from the sand-waste lone;
Weary and wasted, and worn and wan,
Feeble and faint, and languid and low.

He lay on the desert a dying man.

Who has gone, my friends, where we all must
go.

There are perils by land, and perils by water:

Short, I ween, are the obsequies 10

Of the landsman lost, but they may be shorter

With the mariner lost in the trackless seas;
And well for him, when the timbers start.

And the stout ship reels and settles below,
Who goes to his doom with as bold a heart
As that dead man gone where we all must go.

Man is stubborn his rights to yield,

And redder than dews at eventide
Are the dews of battle shed on the field

By a nation's wrath or a despot's pride; 20
But few who have heard their death knell roll

From the cannon's lips where they faced the foe,

Have fallen as stout and steady of soul
As that dead man gone where we all must go.

Traverse yon spacious burial ground,
Many are sleeping soundly there
Who pass'd with mourners standing around,
Kindred, and friends, and children fair;
Did he envy such ending? 'twere hard to say;
Had he cause to envy such ending? no; 30
Can the spirit feel for the senseless clay,
When it once has gone where we all must go?

What matters the sand or the whitening chalk,
The blighted herbage, the black'ning log,
The crooked beak of the eagle-hawk,
Or the hot red tongue of the native dog?
That couch was rugged, those sextons rude,
Yet, in spite of a leaden shroud, we know
That the bravest and fairest are earthworms' food,
When once they've gone where we all must go.

With the pistol clenched in his failing hand, 41
With the death-mist spread o'er his fading eyes,
He saw the sun go down on the sand,
And he slept, and never saw it rise;
'Twas well; he toil'd till his task was done,
Constant and calm in his latest throe;
The storm was weathered, the battle was won,
When he went, my friends, where we all must go.

God grant that whenever, soon or late,

Our course is run and our goal is reach'd, 50

We may meet our fate as steady and straight

As he whose bones in yon desert bleach'd;

No tears are needed—our cheeks are dry.

We have none to waste upon living woe;

Shall we sigh for one who has ceased to sigh,

Having gone, my friends, where we all must go?

We tarry yet, we are toiling still;

He is gone and he fares the best.

He fought against odds, he struggled up hill,

He has fairly earned his season of rest; 60

No tears are needed—fill out the wine,

Let the goblets clash, and the grape juice flow:

Ho! pledge me a death-drink, comrade mine,

To a brave man gone where we all must go.

PATMORE

FAINT YET PURSUING

HEROIC Good, target for which the young
Dream in their dreams that every bow is strung,
And, missing, sigh
Unfruitful, or as disbelievers die,
Thee having miss'd, I will not so revolt,
But lowlier shoot my bolt,
And lowlier still, if still I may not reach,
And my proud stomach teach
That less than highest is good, and may be high.
An even walk in life's uneven way, 10
Though to have dreamt of flight and not to fly
Be strange and sad,
Is not a boon that's given to all who pray.
If this I had
I'd envy none!
Nay, trod I straight for one
Year, month or week,
Should Heaven withdraw, and Satan me amerce
Of power and joy, still would I seek
Another victory with a like reverse; 20
Because the good of victory does not die,
As dies the failure's curse,
And what we have to gain
Is, not one battle, but a weary life's campaign.

Yet meaner lot being sent
Should more than me content ;
Yea, if I lie
Among vile shards, though born for silver wings,
In the strong flight and feathers gold
Of whatsoever heavenward mounts and sings 30
I must by admiration so comply
That there I should my own delight behold.
Yea ; though I sin each day times seven,
And dare not lift the fearfulest eyes to Heaven,
Thanks must I give
Because that seven times are not eight or nine,
And that my darkness is all mine,
And that I live
Within this oak-shade one more minute even,
Hearing the winds their Maker magnify. 40

GORDON

THE SWIMMER

With short, sharp, violent lights made vivid,
To southward far as the sight can roam;
Only the swirl of the surges livid,
The seas that climb and the surfs that comb.
Only the crag and the cliff to nor'ward,
And the rocks receding, and reefs flung forward,
And waifs wreck'd seaward and wasted shoreward
On shallows sheeted with flaming foam.

A grim grey coast and a seaboard ghastly,
And shores trod seldom by feet of men, 10
Where the batter'd hull and the broken mast lie—
They have lain embedded these long years ten.
Love! when we wander'd here together,
Hand in hand through the sparkling weather,
From the heights and hollows of fern and heather,
God surely loved us a little then.

The skies were fairer and shores were firmer—
The blue sea over the bright sand roll'd;
Babble and prattle, and ripple and murmur.
Sheen of silver and glamour of gold— 20
And the sunset bath'd in the gulf to lend her
A garland of pinks and of purples tender,

A tinge of the sun-god's rosy splendour,
A tithe of his glories manifold.

Man's works are graven, cunning and skilful,
On earth where his tabernacles are;
But the sea is wanton, the sea is wilful,
And who shall mend her and who shall mar?
Shall we carve success or record disaster
On the bosom of her heaving alabaster? 30
Will her purple pulse beat fainter or faster
For fallen sparrow or fallen star?

I would that with sleepy soft embraces
The sea would fold me—would find me rest
In luminous shades of her secret places,
In depths where her marvels are manifest;
So the earth beneath her should not discover
My hidden couch—nor the heaven above her;
As a strong love shielding a weary lover, 40
I would have her shield me with shining breast.

When light in the realms of space lay hidden,
When life was yet in the womb of time,
Ere flesh was fettered to fruits forbidden,
And souls were wedded to care and crime,
Was the course foreshaped for the future spirit—
A burden of folly, a void of merit—
That would fain the wisdom of stars inherit,
And cannot fathom the seas sublime?

Under the sea or the soil (what matter ?

The sea and the soil are under the sun),
As in the former days in the latter 50

The sleeping or waking is known of none.
Surely the sleeper shall not awaken
To griefs forgotten or joys forsaken.
For the price of all things given and taken.

The sum of all things done and undone.

Shall we count offences or coin excuses.

Or weigh with scales the soul of a man,
Whom a strong hand binds and a sure hand looses,

Whose light is a spark and his life a span ?
The seed he sow'd or the soil he cumber'd, 60
The time he served or the space he slumber'd :
Will it profit a man when his days are number'd,
Or his deeds since the days of his life began ?

One, glad because of the light, saith, "Shall not
The righteous Judge of all the earth do right,
For behold, the sparrows on the house-tops fall not
Save as seemeth to Him good in His sight ? "

And this man's joy shall have no abiding
Through lights departing and lives dividing ;
He is soon as one in the darkness hiding, 70
One loving darkness rather than light.

A little season of love and laughter,
Of light and life, and pleasure and pain,
And a horror of outer darkness after,
And dust returneth to dust again.

Then the lesser life shall be as the greater,
And the lover of life shall join the hater ;
And the one thing cometh sooner or later,
And no one knoweth the loss or gain.

Love of my life ! we had lights in season— 80
Hard to part from, harder to keep—
We had strength to labour and souls to reason,
And seed to scatter and fruits to reap.
Though time estranges and fate disperses,
We have *had* our loves and our loving-mercies :
Though the gifts of the light in the end are curses,
Yet bides the gift of the darkness—sleep !

See ! girt with tempest and wing'd with thunder,
And clad with lightning and shod with sleet, 89
The strong winds, treading the swift waves, sunder
The flying rollers with frothy feet.
One gleam like a bloodshot swordblade swims on
The skyline, staining the green gulf crimson,
A death stroke fiercely dealt by a dim sun
That strikes through his stormy winding sheet.

Oh, brave white horses ! you gather and gallop ;
The storm sprite loosens the gusty reins ;
Now the stoutest ship were the frailest shallop
In your hollow backs, or your high-arch'd manes.

I would ride as never a man has ridden 100
In your sleepy swirling surges hidden,
To gulfs foreshadow'd through straits forbidden,
Where no light wearies and no love wanes.

MACDONALD

THE FAILING TRACK

WHERE went the feet that hitherto have come?

Here yawns no gulf to quench the flowing Past:
With lengthening pauses broke, the path grows
dumb;

The grass floats in; the gazer stands aghast.

Tremble not, maiden. Let the footprints die.

No trodden way leads up the skylark's notes;
The mighty-throated, when he mounts the sky,
Over some lowly landmark sings and floats.

Be of good cheer. Paths vanish from the wave
Where thousand ships have torn their tracks of
gray; 10

But ships undaunted still the desert brave;
In each a magic finger points the way.

No finger finely touched, no eye of lark,
Hast thou to guide thy steps where footprints
fail?

Ah, then, 'twere well to turn before the dark,
Nor dream to find thy dreams in yonder vale!

The backward path one hour is plain to see—
Hapless wert thou, if that were lost behind!

Back to the prayer beside thy mother's knee—

Back to the question and the childlike mind! 20

Then start afresh—but toward some noble end,

Some goal o'er which hangs a known star all

night:

So shalt thou need no footprints to befriend:

Child-heart and shining star will guide thee right.

NOTES

John Milton

1608—1674.

1. **Crystal spheres**, refers to the "Music of the spheres" of Plato, in his explanation of the harmonious structure of the heavens as a number of hollow shells or spheres each with its own motion, and sounding its own note: the Sun being carried round in one, the Moon in another, and so on.
5. **bass**, the lowest part in music.
8. **consort**, accompaniment: the heavens supplying the instrumental music to accompany the angels' song.
12. **speckled**, with foul or black spots.
19. **arras**, tapestry named after the town in France where it was made.
22. **tissued**, tissue was especially used of gold or silver cloth, so here the colour of the clouds is meant, lit up with heavenly light.

Adam Lindsay Gordon

1833—1870.

Gordon is regarded as the Australian national poet. He went to Australia at the age of 20. His fondness of riding led him to devote himself professionally to businesses connected with horses. In the course of 7 years spent as a wandering horse-breaker he travelled over much of the South Australian bush, studying at nights in his lonely tent. He became known and popular, and sat in the Parliament of South Australia for 2 years, during which he studied still more, but hated debates and long dull sittings. He was unsuccessful in business, but gained successes in riding steeplechases, and gave himself to this and to poetry. From both, and from his attractive and unusual personality, he won a considerable fame: but being in difficulties, and never quite recovering from a very bad fall, he committed suicide.

From the Wreck.

1. **super**, for superintendent or supervisor.
23. **wombat**, a small animal with a 'pouch' (marsupial): only found in Australia.
32. **belt**, of country: strip or portion.
40. **Sugarloaf**, a frequent name for a hill. Conical 'loaves' of sugar used to appear in shop windows in England, but are now uncommon.
84. **clean bred**, thorough bred, of pure stock.
105. **wattle-fire**, the bright blossom of the wattle-trees; this tree is of the same family as the 'Kikar' thorn in the Punjab.
116. It had been a tremendous ride for a mare not in condition, and not having had grain but only grass for her feed.
128. **how much for her hide?** *i. e.*, that was all her value.

William Wordsworth

1770—1850.

The first great poet of Nature, Wordsworth led the revolt, with Coleridge and Southey, against the literature of manners and town topics which characterised the eighteenth century. It was Scott, nevertheless, who shared his enthusiasm for Nature more than either of Wordsworth's particular associates in the movement. Only Wordsworth, often tired of life and vexed with its dull routine, drew his whole inspiration and refreshment from Nature.

He was placed in the country's quiet solitude by his work as a humble official, and later by his own choice; and he not only drew upon Nature for happiness, but reflected deeply on the question why and how Nature could so contribute to man.

This reflection appears in the very simple poem on a little girl who died almost in infancy.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

1807—1882.

Both Longfellow and Lowell were typical cultured Americans who had travelled much and drew their subjects largely from Europe.

The Song of Hiawatha.

The so-called 'Indians' of North America tell many stories of their hero Hiawatha, which the poet has tried to render. The metre (four trochees to a line) deserves a word: the writer has performed a feat in making these lines, without caesura (break of sentence in the middle of a line), and therefore without metrical variety, sound continuously attractive and not, as might be expected, monotonous. This is partly due to the picturesque use of native names, partly to the adoption from the native idiom of a plaintive repetition: and also to the fact that from the shortness and speed of the lines a larger unit is formed consisting of a rapid section or stanza generally varying from 5 to 10 lines in length.

The Introduction itself aptly illustrates these qualities of the verse.

56. **by the black line**, referring to the inky appearance of water amid snow: this however would not be seen during the long hard frosts when ice and ground alike were snow-covered.

A Dutch Picture.

2. **singed the beard**, a saying made famous by Francis Drake, in reference to his burning the Spanish fleet in Cadiz Harbour.

11, 21, **tulip-garden**, and **windmills**, both are famous features of Holland: the tulips are grown for pleasure and also, as at Haarlem, with great success for profit.

34. **like those by Rembrandt**; a famous painter, particularly impressive in his treatment of firelight upon figures and faces in unlit rooms.

listed, from **list**, in a sense now uncommon; **list** meant originally a strip or stripe, edge or border; and **listed** here means 'striped.'

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

1809—1892.

Tennyson was pre-eminently the poet of Queen Victoria's reign, and he is the worthy representative of all that was best in that period. The classical languages, Greek and Latin, early attracted him. Though the

same might be said of most educated men of the nineteenth century, no other poet has so finely and in such lucid verse realised the stories and characters of those ancient literatures : Oenone, Ulysses, Tithonus, Lucretius. Tiresias, are not merely sketches but finished pictures glowing with the beauty of art. The pieces of his early manhood show all his best gifts. Later a moral and religious seriousness and a philosophy of moderation are superimposed, making the style more thoughtful, less radiantly attractive, but still artistic and finished ; while the subjects treated are more directly human and vital. Ideal beauty, ideal virtue and courage shine in his more youthful works. The present extracts are all of this kind, save that Locksley Hall shows his later bent towards reflection on common problems of life.

Tithonus.

Tithonus was a mortal beloved by Eos [**Greek**], the Dawn, who granted him immortality ; but as he omitted to ask for undying youth, he found immortality a sore burden when old age overtook him : he prayed to die, but it appeared the gifts of the gods were unalterable and must remain.

25. the silver star, thy guide, the Morning Star.

30. the goal of ordinance, the goal ordained.

32. 34. Once more it is morning : the beautiful change comes over the face of the dawn.

39. The wild team : it is usually the Sun which is said to ride in a chariot drawn by four fiery steeds : here transferred to the Dawn.

52-53. Apollo was said to have built Troy by the mystic power of his music, being a marvellous performer on the lyre : Iliou is the Greek name of Troy.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

1772—1834.

On a Cataract.

This is a translation, or retelling of a German poem

Love.

This was originally intended as an introduction to a longer poem never written.

41. Scorn, the scornful refusal of his love by the Lady.

To a Singer.

Addressed to the singer William Linley.

12. angel-guide, an angel sent to guide the departing spirit to heaven.

13. the cup of anguish, the pain of death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

1806—1861.

Ill-health and painful bereavement shadowed the life of Elizabeth Barrett before she met and married Robert Browning. After her marriage in 1846 her life was spent for considerable periods in Italy. Even as a child she had been remarkably clever, well-educated and deeply read. Both she and her husband were of a deeply religious nature. She retained a sensitive shrinking from the noisy world which was partly physical, and turned with longing and intense feeling to subjects mysterious and romantic.

The Romaunt of the Page.

5. palmer, a poor monk.

8. the dews: so long did they meditate, so numerous the beads they might have told; the dewdrops are suggested on account of their number.

48. **pastoral**, meditative, as of the shepherd singing to himself in solitude, and letting the beauty of the spot fire his imagination.
50. **if the grasses die or grow**, caring nothing whether Nature puts on her best show or not; the knight still speaks in some scorn of the "pastoral" mood of the page.
51. Continuing the subject broken off at line 12 by the page's plea for thoughts of other things than war.
71. **beati, beati mortui!** 'Blessed, blessed are the dead'.....A funeral service is being sung in Latin by the nuns of a convent for the death of their abbess. This strange and mournful chant, borne fitfully on the wind, is heard by the knight and not by the page at first. In the poem it is dramatically thrown in, as in a play some hint to the audience of the doom of the hero increases the effect and the interest of the subject.
81. **charge**, very often used of preaching or exhortation: "I charge you, do your duty towards God and towards man."
90. **the uplands...sun**, The vision suggested by the sound can only stay as long as the wind is strongly carrying the sound. When the wind falls it "sweeps back" and dies away. The uplands interrupt the wind, else the impressive nearness of the mourning chant would cast a gloom over the day.
104. **would to none I had granted boon**, taking up the page's words in line 98. What the knight is blaming himself for appears in stanzas XXI, XXII.
111. **that heavy price**. The stanza (XV) roughly means: "I paid a great price for a certain service done to me and my family, in burdening myself and my life with a marriage towards which I could have no strong inclination. The effort it cost me to bind myself to that lady was one which I forced myself to make without a murmur."
126. **his image**: the effigy of the knight was not, as commonly, a reposing figure, but a kneeling one.
- 127-180. It was the knowledge that the knight was dead, and his monument there in the church, that gave courage to the liar to defame him.

137. **in appeal**: appeal is rather strained, for it is a change of tactics that is meant: from lying he turned to force for help.
155. **ble**, French for wheat: *white of blé*, wheat-white, wheat-pale.
158. Her calmness was more difficult to resist than argument would have been.
204. **by truth, or by despair**: by faithful or desperate deeds.
- 227-9. With these words the disguised wife's last hope is shattered.
239. **the cry at his heart is still**, *i.e.* it is stifled ere it can proceed further and escape from his lips.
- 327-8. Probably referring to the beautiful expression seen sometimes upon the faces of the dying.
329. **ingemisco**, the Latin for 'I mourn, I raise my voice in mourning for.'
332. **As,—as if**.
- 337-8. Probably referring to the fact that they have stifled love and natural affections for the sake of holiness: their voices, different from those of worldly people, convey no impression of strong feeling, of a heart beating strong with emotion.
- 340-1. The dirge sounds really for two, though accidentally for the second, as the last three lines of the poem plaintively repeat (316-8).
344. **all as sad if not as loud**, the sound is fainter when it reaches the lonely corpse in the path.

Robert Burns

1759—1796.

A generous youth—he died young—Burns was of humble birth, a ploughman poet. Of careless habits by nature, he was perhaps a little spoilt by the attention he received from people of rank and learning; but his warmth of feeling and the naturalness of much of his poetry justify his repute in Scotland, where he is regarded as the national poet.

2. **tassie**, like many other Scotch words, a French word very little altered; Fr. *tasse*, a cup.
5. **Berwick Law**, a hill near the Firth of Forth: *law* means *hill*.
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Thomas Campbell

1777—1844.

Lord Ullin's Daughter.

25. **Water-wraith**, or water-kelpie, a female spirit in floods and fords, almost universally believed in by country folk 100 years ago; she it was who drowned unfortunate travellers, and her voice was heard in the storm.
42. **fast prevailing**, i.e., the waves kept pouring into the boat which was rapidly filling.

John Russell Lowell

1819—1891.

Ambrose.

4. **the father of sin**, the Devil.
6. **to God's hand**, for God to use, shape or mould as He saw fit.
9. **much wrestling**, i.e., wrestling much.
3. At last he thought he had succeeded in finding a formula or form of words which could not admit of any doubt or dispute: which could not give an excuse for any heresies. It was his main object to stop heresies, or false interpretations of Christian doctrine: many of these springing from questions of the meaning of a word. He would define clearly at last what Christ and his Apostles had really meant.
42. **several pillar of fire and cloud**, separate guidance: the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day having guided the Israelites marching under Moses' command in the desert.
46. **dividual**, the opposite of individual or indivisible. To believe there can be two truths is practically as bad as denying that God is one.
60. **fit this sign, etc.**, take the illustration supplied by common water and apply it to the Water of Life, to the faith which you believe so vital: and understand that the faith also may be held in different ways by different persons.

Sir Edwin Arnold

1832—1904.

The Light of Asia [Extract, Bk. III.]

This once-famed poem is slipping into some neglect, largely because the writer, though well-equipped with enthusiasm for his subject, falls short in poetic workmanship. There are however fine passages of description.

Herein is narrated the second glimpse of real life allowed to Prince Siddartha, the Buddha, which increases, instead of decreasing, the unrest of his spirit.

Tennyson

The Kraken.

13. **the latter**, i. e., the last : the fire which will consume the world at the Last Day.

Longfellow

The Musician's Tale [From Tales of a Wayside Inn].

(The Ballad of Carmilhan).

16. **spinning a yarn**, telling a story.
18. **Kobold**, a German name for goblins, little fairy men not ill-disposed but fond of tricks and mischief ; angry if badly treated, helpful if well-treated.
72. **by the Kingdoms Three**, probably Denmark, Norway and Sweden.
86. **fo'castle**, pronounced *foes'l*. The fore-castle, or raised front part of a ship, where the sailors' quarters are.
87. **Blaspheme**, use bad language.
- 96—100. That is, the sun has gone lower in the west.

101. **Valdemar**, or Waldemar, a name of several kings of Denmark; the one referred to is Waldemar II. 'the Conqueror,' 1202—1214.
104. **dismembered**, the reflection is shattered into pieces by the ripple on the water as the wind begins to ruffle the surface.
- 133—140. That is, lighthouses or beacons appear first low in the distance, then high and bright above the ship as it passes them, and then they sink far behind.
158. That is, there was an upper edge of white all along the ragged clouds, as if snowy summits were rising above forest-clad slopes.
175. **and lurched into the sea**, as she cut with a rolling motion into some rising wave in front of her, taking water on her decks.

TENNYSON

Ulysses.

Ulysses, or Odysseus, the island chief of Ithaca, has returned from his twenty years' wanderings after the fall of Troy: the famous Slaying of the Suitors is now a thing of the past: a time of peace and quiet has ensued, long enough now to sicken the traveller of inaction.

4. **unequal**: he sees that law is not always equity in particular cases, and he is in a carping mood.
10. **Hyades**: a tiny constellation of stars said to cause rain.
26. **every hour**: understood, 'that I spend in seeking.' He has just said that *many* lives would be, for the seeker, all too short.
29. **suns**, here years, courses of the sun.
35. **discerning to fulfil**, wise to fulfil, this construction being imitated from Greek and Latin poets; wise in fulfilling. It is again imitated in line 40, *decent not to fail*.
53. **men that strove with gods**. In the Homeric account of the Trojan War the gods are shown taking sides and constantly interfering for the benefit of Greeks or Trojans; Ulysses means, however, not only this but also the persecution which the hostile party of gods practised on him in tossing him about on the seas: the god of the sea was one of the chief of these enemies.

64. **Achilles**, the leader of a large portion of the Greek army at Troy.
66. **temper**, in the sense of the temper of a sword, its hard make and quality of metal.

Locksley Hall.

Much of the splendid effectiveness of this poem results from its long trochaic metre. It may be noticed how skilfully it is varied by different breaks in the lines, for example in lines 153. 161.

The place described is near the east coast of England; the speaker, a young man of twenty-five, disappointed and feeling old. The opinions he expresses are violent and prejudiced when touching his rival. In the companion poem 'Locksley Hall Sixty Years After,' which Tennyson wrote much later, the speaker, now aged 85 or so, modifies and corrects what he had here rashly spoken. The mood of old age may be wiser, but it is less interesting than that of youth here portrayed.

14. **closed**, that is, enclosed, enfolded.
- 15-16. See the recurrence of practically the same stanza at lines 69-70 and the continuation in which the vision of the future is detailed.
31. Time is represented in pictures as an old man with an hour-glass and other symbols.
- 33-34. **Chord**, means first the string itself which is struck and vibrates; but to *strike a chord*, on the piano, for example, means to strike three notes together whose sound is in harmony; *chord* being also applied to the harmony consisting of three notes. Here there is a change from one meaning to the other; for otherwise a chord could not pass out of sight. Love plays, as it were, the music of Self, only to make it vanish; for love appeals to the whole self and strikes it into action, but also causes that forgetfulness of self which is more noble, an unselfish devotion to the beloved object.
41. **fathoms**, to fathom a mystery is to understand its depths, or to comprehend it.
42. **shrewish tongue**, her mother's: she listens to her father when he threatens, to her mother when she scolds: the blame is unjust, as befits the violence of the disappointed lover.

43. to decline on, a more primary meaning than usual for *decline*, 'to let oneself down to,' or 'slide down to.'

59-62. the social wants, the fact that the ways of Society require people to follow custom, to keep a certain standard of living, for which lovers have sometimes too little money; so that parents will not agree to their marrying, or marriage becomes too long delayed. Having cursed the weakness of the lady and the opposition of her parents, he now curses the times and the state of society, all artificial conditions due to public opinion and even economic necessity. *The social lies*, the false talk of matches as suitable which are obviously unnatural. *e. g.* of a wealthy old man with a young bride: the standards are false, yet by these standards the majority judge. *The sickly forms* may refer to formal consent of parents, the mere bargaining in formal marriage settlements, or he may even be cursing the marriage rite itself: he is, as he says, blustering, and his anger is beyond reason.

5-6. The saying is that the bitterest part of the sufferings of the devils in hell is the remembrance that they were angels in 'Paradise once: this is worse than the actual tortures of fire.

93-4. He imagines her bargaining over the marriage of a daughter of her own: full of the false prejudices of a narrow-minded social circle, giving the daughter worldly advice against her real choice. The words which follow quote, as it were, the words of false prudence she will use to her daughter some twenty years hence.

97. Overlive it. Suppose however she comes to forget the first unhappiness of her marriage, and recovers her spirits and contentment? There is a possibility of this: and it may be in vain that he prophesies the ruin of her life. The idea seems to mock him: he must turn to something to distract his thoughts.

104. laid, usually 'calmed'; but here, simply overpowered with the louder noises, unheard while the guns are thundering.

105-6 Bitterly sarcastic: the nations do not go to war for Honour any more.

- 107-8.** He repents suddenly of his cynicism: "Surely I can get again my boyish view of the world, all splendid and full of achievement: need I live over again sad memories only, and not these?"
- 125-6.** The sense continues from *narics* in line 121, movies rushing warm (with the heat of movement or of motive power) along the fat-spread winds, with their standards whirled through cloud and sunshine alike.
- 133-8.** Here is the contrast, a picture of the cynicism which now besets him in disappointment.
- 137.** The hungry '*people*', i.e. populace, is the same as the *mob* in line 131 whose commonsense he trusted, now he sees the other aspect of democracy, a disastrous barbarism slowly coming nearer to engulf civilisation. This is, of course, a vision which has appeared to men in all ages.
- 153. here at least, where nature sickens, nothing.** He means, as he looks round on the dreary winter landscape: here in this cold England at least, is no passion: they feel less who live here, where even Nature falls sick, than I, born in a summer clime.
- 157.** To escape from work, from conventionality, from every restraint, and to live a merely natural, if barbaric, existence: for this the tropical islands of the Pacific, the 'South Sea islands', have seemed to travellers the ideal region: for no one has to work there in order to eat.
- 180.** For the incident of Joshua commanding the sun and the moon, and suspending their course till the Israelites had slaughtered their enemies, see Old Testament, Book of Joshua, ch. X. 12-14.
- 183-4. through the shadow of the globe:** night is the shadow of the globe. We are, as far as the world's progress is concerned, really advancing to light from darkness: what we count progress in Europe is progress: to live an age, an æon of many centuries, in Mongolia would not be worth while in exchange for an ordinary life-time here: he has confidence, at last, in his destiny and that of his people.
- 191. blackening over,** construed together: covering with blackness.

Milton

On his Blindness.

Milton became blind in the year 1652. This was a great grief to him : but in the third of his lifetime that remained his great works. *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, were written.

- 7-8. (continued from line 1): *when I consider.....I ask whether God demands what I cannot perform, as it is from Him that my affliction comes.*

On his Deceased Wife.

2. **Alcestis**, the queen famous in Greek legend, and made more famous by the play of Euripides on the subject : who offered herself to die for her husband King Admetus, and according to one version of the story, was brought back by the hero Hercules ("*Jove's great son*") from death.
- 5-6. The Jewish law, set forth in the twelfth chapter of Leviticus, prescribed a period of purification after childbirth, ending with a sacrifice. Milton's wife had died in childbirth.
10. **fancied sight**, as I saw in my vision, (though I am blind).

Sir Walter Scott

1771—1832.

The Chase.

[Extract from 'The Lady of the Lake' Canto I.]

It was Sir Walter Scott who first drew the attention of the public both in England and in Scotland to the beauties of Scottish scenery. He deals here with Central Scotland. The hunt starts south of Crieff and runs south, south-west, and west to the lake region called the Trossachs, famous since Scott's descriptions. The lakes are Lochs Katrine, Achray and Vennachar. Ben Voirlich, Uam Var, Ben Ledi and Ben Venne are heights of 3,000 feet and under, but except Uam Var they are of commanding aspect.

- 4,6. **Glen Artney**, the valley of the Artney. The upper part of this lies to the east of Ben Voirlich, so that the morning light is seen striking the mountain-top.

18. **Beam'd frontlet**, these are sportmen's terms; Scott introduces many technical terms of the chase. *Frontlet* is forehead: *beam*, the thick part of the horns or 'antlers: the phrase would only be used of a mature stag.
20. **Tainted**, spoilt, as by an unpleasant smell.
34. **Clear'd**, jumped right out of, got clear of: he had been lying in the copse all night.
27. **opening**, a hunting term: to 'open,' to 'give tongue,' used of the pack all bursting into 'full cry.' *Picw* is equally a regular hunting term.
39. **cairn**, a heap of stones, generally raised on a mountain top; the falcon is perched on one.
44. **linn**, Scotch for waterfall.
58. **burst**, an uninterrupted run at full speed.
52. **Menteith**, still further to the south-west, a region of plain round the Lake of Menteith: Aberfoyle and Loch Ard, still further to the west. These places were seen in the far distance, but were too far off to reach.
90. **emboss'd**, Scott seems to use it in the sense (as once in Shakespeare) of 'splashed with foam,' the flakes of foam being boss-shaped. Any other interpretation would be difficult.
98. **vindictive**, like Fate or a Fury determined to punish: remorseless, with a kind of anger urging them on. The usual connection of the word is with revenge, but not so here.
111. **whinyard**, spelt also whinger, hanger, etc, is a corruption of *khanjar*, a sword or long knife.
120. **close**, in concealment: to 'lie close,' to lie hidden: also 'to be close,' to be secret.

Thomas Hood

1799—1845.

Hood's reputation is sometimes thought to rest wholly on fun and puns; but his serious poems are many and beautiful. He was deeply read in Elizabethan poetry. The opening lines of these sonnets sound as though in frank imitation of those of Shakespeare, but they are carried out with a simpler touch and less elaborate antithesis.

Love's Champion.

"I swear to love so, and do such deeds of sacrifice or glory for love, that the famous lovers of old shall scarcely compare with me."

2. **In love with his own love**, still keeping current his own old stories.

6-8. Hood treated the famous story of Hero and Leander himself in one of the longest of his poems. Leander, for love of Hero, swam the Hellespont nightly to meet her, but at last was drowned.

11 Sappho, the poetess of the Greeks overseas in Asia Minor, threw herself from a high rock into the sea.

On Receiving a Gift.

7. **Our tokens.** gifts we give as token of our love.

Undying Love.

4. **Skims**, is content with the surface, and cannot penetrate to the real character.

5. **As if the rose made summer**, But summer makes the rose; and know that it is my love's fair nature that gives her outward beauty. It is that nature that I admire: not as others, who saw the beauty only and will cease to love as the cheek fades.

9. **whose health is of no hue**, i. e., is not shown by colour, my love being set above those inconstant and material existences which turn now pale and sickly, and now burn red. A poorer or lower Love will flourish when the cheek is bright with youth and health, and pale and sicken as the cheek fades: not so true love.

Lear.

See Shakespeare's *King Lear*; or Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*.

Robert Browning

1812—1889.

Many of Browning's poems are difficult and clumsy: stuffed full of ideas and metaphors, and overloaded with digressions. Others, however, generally the shorter ones, are full of poetical beauty and perfect sound. He was a practical philosopher, and when forcing verse to serve the turn of his philosophy he became heavy and tedious: but he was a sympathetic observer of men and things, and in lighter moments could illumine them in verse with cleverness, kindness, and humour.

The Englishman in Italy. (Plain of Sorrento).

This poem just shows traces of the digressions which puzzle the reader of Browning's longer works: but on two or three readings these fall into place and even add to the art of the description: and indeed whatever we may think of it, digression was to Browning an artistic method, a way of achieving certain effects. Within limits, as here, it was successful. The writer describes Italian country life, which he loved: the plain, the coast, the mountains, the Mediterranean fruits and foods, and lastly, with delightful pleasantry, the people's simple superstitious piety. The promontory of Sorrento lies just south of Naples and Vesuvius and Pompeii: it includes a little plain facing northwards to the bay of Naples, which is very fertile and has been a resort for city people since early times. The whole south part of the promontory is a line of steep bare hills, not very high, but making it easier to go round by boat from Sorrento to the places on that side and further along the coast to Amalfi and Salerno.

5. **Scirocco**, the sirocco, a hot and moist wind from the direction of Africa, unpleasant and oppressive. The child is fretful with the weather and has to be amused and petted to pass away the bad time, till Scirocco with his black mist is gone.

11, **all the Plain saw**, etc. I string together all the scenes and incidents from the country side that I remember. *The Plain saw me gather* is only a poetical figure for *I gathered from*

the Plain. The Englishman in simply recording the sights of Italy.

16. **marked**, etc., the surface of the grapes was mottled like a quail's head.
17. The child probably took great interest in the quails caught in the nets.
21. **your mother bites off**. When quails are cooked their heads are very often fried so brittle that they are easily chewed. The Italian cooking of quails is famous.
23. **Chapping**, cracking with dryness.
35. **quail-nets**, for catching quails for market, especially in the months May to July and September.
36. **before**, etc. Before I had time, *i. e.*, before it was late enough for me to rise, undo the shutter and look out through the branches of vine which cover my window, the quail-nets were being hastily taken in and the noise woke me.
47. **frails**, baskets : a word of unknown derivation.
57. **Sea-fruit**, a translation of the phrase locally used.
61. **which only the fisher looks grave at**, as he has no use for jelly-fish but only for fish of market value.
70. **so back, to a man, came our friends**. As fishing was impossible, the peasants came back and worked at the vineyards instead.
87. **the love-apple**: the tomato.
92. **best of regales**, a verb used as a noun ; best thing you can be regaled with, tastiest dish.
93. **to my sorrow**, referring lightly to the expense of feasting the harvesters.
97. **lasagne**, a peculiarly Italian dish, cooked as macaroni and similarly eaten.
100. **that colour of popes**; purple was the Emperor's colour in Imperial Rome, being a most expensive dye, and tradition kept it the sign of ruling dignity, the Popes also wearing it.
101. This grape bunch is apparently of purple grapes, with the bluish bloom on their skins: white grapes were mentioned in line 15 above.
136. **sorbs**, a tree bearing a sort of inferior fruit: the service apple.

- 152-4. Calvano**, a corruption of Vico Alvano, a steep hill about 1,600 ft. high. Wind effects on mountain-tops can be seen in various forms: the flurry of snow from a snowy peak: the driving of vapour over the summit: and as here, the black mist of the storm clothing the mountain's whole side but being attacked at the top by a stiff breeze of clearer air which opens up the sky: the sun's rays on the veil of driven mist make a picture wonderfully described here - *flutter..... airy gold fame.*
- 153. show**, a religious celebration, for the approaching Festival of the Virgin of the Rosary.
- 167. Bellini, Auber**, musical composers whose works might be difficult for the players.
- 170. for the feast's second course**, for the next item in the celebration.
- 171. flaxen-wigged Image**. A very crudely-got-up doll serves as the likeness of the Virgin: it has yellow hair and rosy cheeks.
- 174. stomp**, an invented word so far as English literature is concerned, though this way of pronouncing *stamp* or *stump* may be found in local dialect. *Gallant* and *stomp* together indicate that the priests take vast pride in the show and march along with much dignity which their physical 'presence' hardly justifies: *stumping* is stiff, clumsy and heavy walking.
- 177.** The Image is carried round some villages and back into the church again, which marks the end of the more solemn proceedings and the beginning of the rejoicings.
- 178. religiously**, duly and as an important observance not to be omitted.
- 183. at all events, come.....** The child is being coaxed out of the house to see that the storm is really past and there is nothing now to fret about.
The child of six or less, absorbed in quails, scorpions, spiders and jelly-fish, is of course used as a poetical device, and forms the excuse for minute description of the country and seaside sights.
- 188. end.** A light and whimsical finish. The debate on the Corn-Laws in 1846 was to settle Britain's policy in regard to Free

Trade. How could there be any doubt, says the poet, that abolishing Corn-Laws is righteous and wise? It will be like the clearing away of the horrible Scirocco; yet sensible men argue about it—a waste of time.

Hood.

Fair Ines.

The verse is artificial, written for the sake of the sound on an imaginary subject. The picture has to be pieced together thus: Ines weds a cavalier from the West and leaves our shores; they ride, towards evening, from their wedding in the church, down to the shore, where they embark amid music and applause.

3. to dazzle: as though she became a star of evening in the Western sky.

12. unrivalled applies to both moon and stars: lest they should lack a rival in brightness, *i. e.* the lady.

30. snowy plumes: this is necessarily vague: white feathers or dress. His picture may include both wedding helmet plumes of cavaliers and white garb of bridesmaids, 'plumes' or 'feathers' being sometimes used of dress, as in the phrases 'fine feathers,' 'borrowed plumes.'

38. Music's wrong, either the wrong done to Music or that done by Music: probably the latter, *i. e.*, they felt how music could hurt, when it was the music of parting: a stab to the bereaved heart.

Burns

Bonnie Lesley.

Written in honour of Miss Lesley Baillie, at her departure for England on an ordinary occasion.

Tennyson

The Vision of Sin.

Sections I, II. The Palace of Sin.

6. **A sleepy light**, etc. The half light that prevails when the sun is eclipsed is generally accompanied with a strange hush. There is an absence of animal sounds, and birds are observed to mistake it for evening and go to sleep.
18. **wov'n in circles**, returning to the same tune again, recurring.
25. **orbs of song**, perhaps not to be explained very closely, but the same idea may be understood as in line 18. *circles*.
41. **Furies. Graces**, creations of Greek mythology, the latter representing beauty and youth, the former horror, remorse and punishment: the three Furies are the spirits that pursue murderers, the Graces attend on Venus the goddess of beauty. The poet means that there was both beauty and ugliness in the expression and gestures of the dancers.
43. After the climax of pleasure the charm suddenly fades. We are left to understand that the tenants of the Palace of Sin live only for moments like these, otherwise their life is empty: they drink again, eat, and again "expect." wait for, the spouting of the fountain, the coming of the frenzy.

Section III. The Coming Doom.

- 57, 58. 'My dream broke off, then began again: the interval being of unknown duration.
62. The wretched tavern takes the place of the palace: pleasure is no longer attractive, nor its devotee fit for enjoyment.

Section IV. Retribution.

The lover of luxury has become a cynic. All is hollow, nothing is good or beautiful. He sees through all pretences, and all is pretence: what men seek is worthless. Fame? friendship? virtue? politics? liberty? the millennium? He sees through all, particularly exposing the contradictions involved in all struggles for freedom.

138. 140. **the canting liar**, i. e. Friendship. By 'cant' we mean hypocrisy: whatever is fine to say but not likely to be really

felt; insincere echoing of moral maxims or common opinions.
She, again. Friendship, used by personification for the friends.

167, a civic wreath. the Latin *corona civica*, a garland publicly bestowed for distinguished civil services.

168. Chiefly thinking of the proceedings of the French Revolution. We now have a Russian parallel.

170. Far from being new, as enthusiasts think, these liberations of mankind are an old story; calling themselves free, men always take the occasion to oppress others and commit excesses.

The hue of that cap. red; we recognise it, we have seen it before, the red flag of revolution and we know what horrors are committed under it. See Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*.

179. the public fool, the politician, the champion of a political party: the loves and hates of party politics are frantic in the expression at least.

209. Vivat Rex, live the King! Skeletons, what we are when dead—that is what we really are when alive? the rest is but disguise.

218. neither...framed, neither a sculpture nor a picture. Or which neither sculptors nor painters ever take for their subject. Modelling in clay is the first work of the sculptor; then he copies his modelled, moulded figure in stone.

221-3. Fortune, Chance, Ignorance, the opposites of, purpose and Providence (God) and knowledge: it is a denial of any worth in the attempt to be good, to do right, to choose one's life.

225. His boon-companion, the aged waiter, looks shocked, perhaps.

227-8 I am not all as wrong.....dear. It is not that I am wholly of these perverse opinions, rather it is that I love being bitter and indulging in mockery. I mock what is fine, or sacred, or respected, for mocking's sake: it is the only taste left to me.

231. It is a wild, mad bitterness, *maudlin gall*.

233. This line perhaps expresses simply a desire for company; explaining why he has sought the 'Dragon on the Heath' and the ancient waiter's society.

Section V.

240. **lower forms**, of animal life, such as worms, maggots, or lower still, tiny organisms as in rotting things.
- 243-4. **sense**, indulgence of the senses: and *sense that wore*, tiring and exhaustion of the senses, of the power to feel pleasure.
- 245-6. The heedless lapse into self-indulgence is no better than positive wickedness in the end: passive tends to become the same as active wickedness.
- 247-8. He would not be so bitter were he not still able to feel something; namely, the sting of remorse, the pain of knowing the good he has missed. The cynic is bitter and stings because he is himself stung inwardly.

Wordsworth

Sonnet.

3. **citadels**, probably thinking of students working in lodgings high up in tall buildings in narrow streets.
7. The buzz of the bee, echoing curiously softened in the deep bell of the flower; a quaint comparison of the Sonnet. The bee is tired of rambling, and the poet of his more unrestrained flights in verse.
- by the hour, an hour at a time: probably an exaggeration, but bees do stay a remarkable length of time in some flowers.

Scott

The Battle of Bannockburn.

3. **Demayet or Dumyat**, a high point of the Ochil Hills near Stirling.
7. **planet**, (from Greek). "wanderer". here used of the moon
13. **plain**. The forms *complain*, *complaint*, are commoner than *plain*, *plaint*.
18. **wassail**, originally an Anglo-Saxon cry when drinking a health in wine: *waes hael!* Here an adjective: usually a noun, meaning revelry, drinking.

18. **mass**, the Christian religious service or form of prayers, at that time universal: now so called by Roman Catholics.
33. **cross'd**, made the sign of the Cross upon, as a defence from harm.
45. **west**, for the west wind, commonly in poetry.
his. Ocean's Oceanus being personified in ancient times as the god of the great circle of water surrounding all known lands.
56. **won**. 'To win his spurs' was to establish his claim to knight-hood: the famous example was that of the Black Prince at Crecy. His father, King Edward III. refused to send help to him when pressed, saying, "let him win his spurs".
87. **devoted**, in the original Latin sense, 'doomed', fated to die as an offering to angry deities. Here its sense is somewhat blunted fated to suffer heavy losses, distressed and still to suffer.
110. **rest**, the support attached to the saddle, to hold the butt of the lance.
117. **let**, an old word meaning to hinder.
118. **stakes**. Archers being rather defenceless against cavalry were provided commonly with stakes to stick upright in the ground, forming a kind of fence.
122. **barbed**, wearing a cloth over the breast and sides, which was called a *barb*, by an error for *bard*.
- 131-139. Sherwood Forest, famous for stout archers and for Robin Hood in particular. The general sense is that the Midland shires such as Nottingham and South Yorkshire supplied the best archers, and that now they will be missed when they fail to return.
138. **wont**. This is really the past tense, and also the past participle, of an old verb *wohn*, still found in German. It is more common to find the word in the past participle, "they were wont", used as a sort of adjective: but its use here as past tense is equally correct and not uncommon in poetry.
144. **wight**, sturdy, bold. As a noun, a wight, meaning a person. (e.g., 'the luckless wight'), is a different word, and rather more common. Both are poetical.
145. **baldrick**, a belt or sash over the shoulder: on it and just behind the shoulder hung the quiver of arrows. Twelve arrows, each a life: this was a marksman's boast.

171. **acton**, a leather vest.
183. **each**, probably *each billow*, the waves of horsemen following each other.
- 195-6. **too well**, because these places were the scenes of heavy defeats of the Scots.
198. Cressy or Crecy, 1346. and Poitiers, 1356, where the English defeated the French.
210. From a Stewart, or (originally) Steward, came the Stuart line of Scottish Kings ; also English Kings from 1603 to 1688.
259. **Ailsa** Craig or Crag, a lonely rock in the Firth of Clyde. Carrick is the mainland opposite to it.
303. **mute Amadine**. The lady Edith had disguised herself as a page, and to maintain the disguise, had pretended to be dumb. She had now spoken in her excitement, and her hearers took it as a miracle.
327. The reputation of Edward II has always been very low, largely as a consequence of this battle and his headlong flight from it to England. Against this opinion of Edward, the poet, as a good historian, protests; he deserved a better fame,
330. **terror and despair**. This is a kind of personification : the terrified and despairing, *i. e.* his men.
333. **his**, the king's; and **him**, the king, not himself.
338. **gage**. It was a point of honour to win back a glove in the keeping of a foe. In challenging, a knight threw down his glove for the other to pick up. Picking it up was an acceptance of the challenge; this was also a point of honour. The fight which followed was to retain or recover the glove. Argentine had on a certain occasion given Bruce his glove, to fight him some day when a better opportunity might come.
357. **the gallant knight** is the subject, **four of the pursuers** the object.
359. **cuish or cuiss**, thigh-piece.
390. Though wounded, he attempted to attack Bruce, thus keeping his honour, a point that Bruce at once recognised.
398. Argentine is speaking: the charge or duty of taking care of his king, seeing him safely off the field, had delayed their meeting.

- 402. mass**, here mass or service for the dead, funeral ceremonies.
411. St. Ninian's. a village near, still bears the name of the convent that existed there at the time.
412. late-wake, watch for the dead, keeping awake by the body while it awaits burial.
421. Banneret, next in rank to baron, and above a knight : now replaced by baronet.
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Tennyson

The Passing of Arthur. [Extract, lines 362-438.]

- 362. they.** Sir Bedivere was carrying King Arthur, sorely wounded through the helmet, down from a rocky ridge to a great water ; Arthur urging him on, lest he should die before reaching the water's edge.
- 366. tingling**, as though it hurt the stars to hear it, and the heavens suffered a shock from the vibrating cry of grief.
- 386. made, i. e.**, used to make, in the hall of the palace at Camelot, which Sir Bedivere would have in mind.
- 399. chance**, the chance of a noble adventure, of fighting against giants or robbers, helping the weak and righting wrongs.
- 401-2.** The Magi, or the 'Three Wise Men of the East,' who saw a new star in the sky and travelled till under it they found the new-born Christ : Matthew, ch. ii, 1—12.
- 428. Avilion, Avalon or Avallon**, a Celtic Paradise.
- 432. crowned**, perhaps surrounded : but more probably as the sea is seen down a valley, a small space of bright sea crowning the beauty of woods and fields, while the open sea is hidden on each side by hills.
- 345-8.** The legend of the swan's dirge is a very old one: according to it, for once the swan's voice is tuneful, when it sings its own death-song, as it floats down a stream to disappear into the distant ocean.
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George Macdonald

1824—1905.

The Sangreal.

[*A part of the story omitted in the old romances.*]

The author rather means, an interpretation not given to the story in the old romances. With great simplicity of language, his thought is a little difficult. The search of man is for an Ideal: only that will draw him on. If he finds a great work to do, finds it interesting, finds it a source of contentment,—then he thinks the strength that has come to him is itself the ideal realised: but he is mistaken. He finds after a while that since he gave up searching, he has stagnated, and the goodness of life has lost its taste. In a moment he resolves to search again: his longing for the Ideal is now more intense. Probably he finds that the only happiness is to search, and make others search. The quest is itself the satisfaction of the quest: or if not satisfaction, it supplies power. He becomes in the eyes of all men as one who has attained the goal and can teach others. But the gift passes with him: in vain do they seek to take it directly from him, because it comes only by earnest search to anyone.

The author clothes this scheme of thought in the ancient tale of the Quest of the Holy Grail as in a parable, or slight and short allegory.

The San-greal, or Sanc-greal, 'holy cup' was supposed to have been filled with Christ's blood, and so to be red. The legend was that a certain Joseph who was present at Christ's death afterwards travelled to England taking the cup along with him: it was then kept in a certain church. It was supposed that the Cup had once been visible, but that in evil and heathen centuries it had been snatched up into heaven: with the good rule of Arthur it was expected to re-appear, and first to the best men.

82. ave, pater, credo (credo), the prayers so named because these are the first words of each in the Latin.

95-6. The hour was spent in making up his mind that further quest was not necessary, that what had given such joy and comfort to him must itself be either the ideal, or as much of it as man could attain.

111-12. He thinks the same joy and comfort will be renewed without the former restless seeking: this is where he finds himself mistaken.

113. **to succour bound**, this was the daily duty of Arthur's knights, and in the author's allegory it represents the daily work or occupation.
126. **askance**, not straight, out of the direct line of vision; his judgment even of what was *good* became warped because he had ceased to strive for the very *best*.
144. **Found it**. The finding represents his discovery that he must *always* continue seeking; and that nothing else matters.
149. He then abandons even his daily round of work to seek God.
- 193-204. The closing section merely represents the fact that the secret is not one that can be communicated to another; it must be striven for and obtained by one's own experience.

Tennyson

Sir Galahad.

It is related in the story of the 'Last Tournament,' held before Arthur's knights departed on the visionary search for the Holy Grail, that in their enthusiasm Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale overthrew more knights than any one else. It is in this frame of mind that Galahad in the poem seems to speak.

16. **thrall**, the thralldom of imprisonment; or that of forced and unhappy marriage.
21. **aspects**, the word is vague: it may mean 'faces'; or it may mean, 'scenes.' The former has more point, as in line 13 the *looks of ladies* are mentioned, and it is with this that '*more bounteous*' would compare. The face or favour of God may be a '*more bounteous aspect*'; but as it is plural, he may mean that protecting saints look on him with favour. Otherwise it must mean visionary scenes like those he sees of heaven in the sixth stanza.
25. **the stormy crescent**, perhaps in reference to the common belief that changes of weather, especially rain and storm, coincide with the new moon.
31. **the stalls**, the seats separated by partitions in the chancel of a church. No priests or monks appear in the seats of these visionary shrines: he is comforted in his course by the mere sight of places prepared for prayer and devotion.

45. **blood of God**: because the Grail was the cup supposed to have held some of the blood of Christ shed on the cross.
47. **down**, i. e. along: the bright-red vision slides away to the horizon, diminishing to a point of light.
53. **leads**, sheets of lead nailed on roofs.
74. **mountain-walls**, introducing another scene of his wanderings. He has already in the poem traversed forest, lake, town and open plain; among the mountain-gorges he now seems to hear heavenly music burst through the clouds overhead. Nature is to him partly natural and partly filled with the supernatural.

Wordsworth

Lines written near Tintern Abbey.

The poet revisits, with his sister, the valley of the Wye (a tributary of the Severn), and reflects on his own change of feeling since his last visit, and on the value of Nature to man, a subject constantly recurring in his poems.

20. **uncertain notice**, suggestion whose correctness is uncertain: i. e. the smoke *may* indicate camp fires of vagrants or hermits.
31. **feelings, too, of unremember'd pleasure**, the poet has mentioned some influences which he did remember: he says, there doubtless have been others which have been forgotten.
- 33-35. **on that**, etc. in forming and producing such a disposition and such acts.
- 36-49. Wordsworth claims a power of detaching himself from the world in solitary meditation, such as the hermit seeks by renouncing the world and its ways.
- the affections**, the feelings, of two kinds, passive and active; the passive and calm enjoyment of Nature's soothing beauty, and the active and conscious sentiment of good-will and love towards all creation.
50. **a vain belief**, an illusion: there is no doubt about the pleasure actually felt in those quiet moments, but one may deceive oneself in thinking they give an insight into the life of things.

- 51, 52. In times when the eye has nothing beautiful to feast on ; *joyless daylight* recurs in many forms in a cloudy, foggy, rainy climate and in the deadness of winter. Even Wordsworth found long periods of his country life thus pass with little joy. The world's *freeful stir* and *fever*, when visiting towns and mixing with men, is another discomfort which clogs the freedom of his thought and hangs like a weight upon the heart.
59. The memories of the former visit, five years before, revive.
61. **sad perplexity**, caused by the change in oneself : this is expanded in the following passage.
65. **life and food for future years**, the scene which has so often comforted me in memory already will surely supply fresh comfort to draw on in future, now that I have seen it again.
66. This is a satisfaction ; and I venture to think it will be so, although there may be a danger that I am less receptive now than I was then.
71. **more like**, etc. This is at first sight difficult, appearing to contradict the general sense : but the period of his life to which he refers was one in which he not only adored Nature but felt her to be his only sustenance : the reader rather misses, in the calm verse, the desperate emphasis of this passage. It was a period when he felt unhappy among men : not drawn to Nature, driven !
- 77-84. He therefore revelled the more in Nature, as it was his only happiness and pleasure ; and this pleasure was chiefly of the eye ; not yet the peace and calm of meditation and understanding of Life and Nature.
- 85, 86. His delight in scenery and the joys of his perceiving senses was then exaggerated, almost violent.
97. **a something**. As some would say, Life : some, God : some, Harmony.
106. **from**, not *on*, in order to include the sky and stars, the worlds beyond this earth.
107. **half create**, because the mind itself supplies form to what it sees.
114. **suffer my genial spirits to decay** : fall into melancholy. The poet is as a matter of fact struggling against a slight feeling of sadness or disappointment, and is consoling himself

for the loss of the more keen and vivid pleasure he first felt in the scene.

- 128. inform**, in the original Latin sense, to form or shape: we should say 'develop.' Compare the very literal use (though intransitive) in *Macbeth*:

It is the bloody business that *informs*
So to mine eyes.

Also compare Tennyson, *The Sleeping Beauty*:

Her constant beauty doth *inform*
Stillness with love, and day with light.

- 149, 150, these gleams of past existence**, perhaps simplest taken to refer, not to "recollections of immortality," but here only to the gleams of forgotten or lost feeling which are revived, first by the scene, but still more by seeing his sister enjoy the scene as he had himself done when younger: thus recalling a part of his own existence that was past.

- 154. rather say with warmer love**, etc. The connection of the words (from **with**) is unfortunately doubtful: it may be referred back to line 145, in spite of the interruption and the slight awkwardness of so taking it: but it is better taken with the verb of line 153; **I hither came** not only **unwearied** but with fresh zeal in Nature's service.

Coventry Patmore

1823—1896.

The Falcon.

- 2. sky-skirted**, touching the horizon.
3. to whose sunning, in order to sun whom: all the rays of fortune converge to gild him.
13. with hope, as the hope of her growing to love him grew fainter, he felt his wealth more and more useless.
24. et seq. As he sat in his room he would rise and go to the falcon and make it respond to his talk and caressing, this occupation helping to break the monotony of solitude.
77. her heart reproached her, etc. so that she suppressed the real object of her visit and substituted another request.

93. on the brand, on burning sticks of coals.

111. to bare friendship, to one who can only claim to be a friend, not nearer.

111-114. Understand it to read "*not* that he was proud, or was overacting...or that he remembered.....": he had in fact forgotten the particular words she used; or at least, was not specially thinking of those words as a hint to remain on mere terms of polite acquaintance. His real reason was the same as it had always been: his own patience and resignation and ignorance that things had changed. lines 115-117.

112. wilful, etc. One may be too virtuous, too narrow and too obstinate in an honourable course of action: and this may cause a tragedy.

113. sacrificial, sacrifice has a sweetness as well as a sadness: the determination to sacrifice oneself may be overdone. Many lovers have been kept apart, the poet means, by over-rigid suppression of self.

120-1 quenched the light, etc., the poet is thinking more of his metaphor than of its application: the cloud quenches the light that makes it splendid, hiding the sunlight though shining with it at the same time.

125. He feared she might wish to offer property or worldly assistance.

129. apprehension, beginning to grasp or understand: not here in its commoner sense of fears.

The Year

A poetic calendar. This is an ancient essay of poets, to round off the seasons in the space of a few words. Virgil does it in four lines and Horace in little more, though incidentally and not in a separate fragment like this.

10. the very thin brittle ice which forms across a narrow wheel-rut.

Walt Whitman

1819-1892.

3. impalpable sustenance, an apparently ill-matched pair of words: a substance is **impalpable**, a process **imperceptible**. The author means the latter, but he means something more.

7. **disintegrated**, probably in the sense of **detached**.
8. **similitudes**, likenesses, images.
15. **Manhattan** is the half-island between rivers which forms the site of the city of New York : **Brooklyn**, a famous suburb across the East River.
22. **project myself** : send forth my spirit out of the body, to distant times or places; the soul being superior to time and space.
28. **on the rail**, of the steamer : he is leaning over the rail at the side, looking down at the water and across the river.
45. **the ladled cups**, the cups or hollows of the little waves : a ladle is shallower than a cup, and **ladled** appears to be only a further definition of the shape in this sense.
55. **Others the same**. 'Others' were also near to me, felt as my kin. Whitman has in his poems a habit of using 'Others' for future generations.
56. **though I stop here to-day and to-night**. The thought is not quite clear, but probably means, 'ages will pass, though I have my little day and night of life' : you, my distant successors, will soon be here.
60. **I too ; I**, like you who will one day read my verses.
65. **struck from the float**, etc., struck as a coin or medal is struck by means of a die from the fluid metal : the idea is of an ethereal substance, permanent, unchangeable, out of which souls are made as by a blow, stamped into a shape which is known as a body : avoiding the usual idea of the soul as contained in but different from the body, this represents Soul as the material, and the body as its temporary but solid form.
66. **identity**, personal and individual existence : for Soul is universal, but becomes particular in the body that is stamped out from it.
67. **That I was**, emphatic **I** : it is the body that makes Me.
82. **nighest**, most familiar.
88. **the part that still looks back on the actor or actress**; these words are capable of at least three interpretations and are thus unfortunately ambiguous. The poet may mean:
(i) that the part we play is conscious, self-conscious at every turn, and we question our own course of action the moment we have taken it.

(ii) that our past is not vanished, but ever with us : what we have done faces us, as in a mirror, as well as what we are doing.

(iii) that the part we play is a part which will still be played by you 'others', you who look back on us.

7. Also ambiguous : it lies in man to make his own success or failure : or more subtly, it is not the role itself so much as the way in which we regard it, not the life we live so much as our scale of values and our appreciation of life. For a poet of detail like Whitman, the second is the more likely turn of thought. **Both great and small** may mean anything.

78. *et seq.* **omission**, source of emission, or emanation.

The philosophy sounds vague, but it is worth some thought to get at the definite idea that occupied the poet's mind. Let us think. He is engrossed with the surroundings of a great city, embracing in his sympathy the multitudes he has left in the streets, the crowds still near him, every aspect of present life, the unnumbered millions of posterity, their unnumbered sensations : there is a unity of life and soul which is stamped on all. Though he does not mention it here, he really means the American national spirit. Every person he meets hails him with it ; it is this he loves in the faces of known and unknown, and this which he knows will bind posterity : every object on the waters indicates this : the sky, the houses, the rock of Manhattan on which New York stands peculiarly firm and unshakable, are America to him, or are New York to him - national sentiment being often more local than it is aware. This is the Film that envelopes the soul of America and Americans for at least some ages, till the spirit be outworn or no longer required. The idea is sufficiently great to need no greater.

107-110 hint at the same thing, as a secret understood between author and reader : and it is carried on through the rest of the poem.

134-135. The water of the Hudson, and the firm-set masonry of the city.

136. The poet now gives the fullest value to external things and justifies his revelling in their beauty : because without the body and material objects, the soul could never express itself.

Arthur Hugh Clough

1819—1861

The metre of this short moral poem is one which is used for serious subjects. It is iambic, but broken by the accent in an impressive manner, as in the words "*fears may be liars*"; "*seem but a painful inch to gain*." The lines have alternately 4½ and 4 feet: and it is on this metre that the stormier rhythm of "*The Swimmer*" is based, with insertion of short syllables and development of the stanza. [See "*The Swimmer*", by A. L. Gordon.]

GORDON

Gone.

Written on one of the two famous explorers of the Australian continent, Burke and Wills, to whom a statue stands in the city of Melbourne.

Coventry Patmore

Faint yet pursuing.

8. **Proud stomach.** A Biblical quotation: "he that hath an high look, and a proud stomach: I will not suffer him."
 13. that is a thing that one is lucky to get.
 20. **Victory:** he regards that year, month or week as a success won against the temptations of the devil.
 23. the order of the words is unfortunate, but it never occurred to the author that the words '*more than me*' might be taken as one phrase; else he might have written '*should me more than content*,' which would avoid the possibility of misconstruction.
 31. **comply**, somewhat unusually, acquiesce or sympathise. I should rejoice to see others do nobly, as though it were myself.
 37. **and that my darkness is all mine.** that the weakness is not in everyone but only in me.
-

Gordon

The Swimmer.

The poet is looking down from the heights of the coast (of South Australia) on the waves rolling in to shore under a stormy sunset: he writes as though he felt it the sunset of his own life, of which he is weary.

Macdonald

The Failing Track.

2. A metaphor different from the main one of the poem, and not quite suitable. The meaning is that one knows not why there should be an abrupt ending here, as when a sudden precipice swallows up a stream. Here is no precipice: yet the path comes to an end.
12. **a magic finger**, the needle of the compass.
13. **a finger finely touched**, that is, given a delicate sense or power of response, as the magnetised needle.